A Guide to Awareness

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Buddha Dharma Education Association Inc.

A Guide to Awareness

Dhamma Talks

on the

Foundations of Mindfulness

(Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta)

by

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Translators' Foreword

This *Guide to Awareness* is a translation from the series of Dhamma talks published in the Thai language as *Naew Patibat Nai Satipatthan* (lit: *The Way of Practice in the Satipatthana*).

The venerable author, HH Somdet Phra Ñāṇasaṁvara, is the Supreme Patriarch of Thailand and head of Wat Bovornives Vihara, a large and famous monastery in the old city of Bangkok. It is a centre for Buddhist study and is well known amongst westerners interested in Dhamma; many of whom have received ordination there with the venerable author as Preceptor.

HH Somdet Phra Ñāṇasaṁvara was born in Kanchanaburi Province, about 130 kilometres northwest of Bangkok, in 2456 B.E. (1913). When he was thirteen years old, he became a novice and in 2476 B.E. he received the higher ordination. On going back to continue his studies in Bangkok he was given new ordination as venerable Bhikkhu Suvaḍḍhano, with the Supreme Patriarch Vajiranyanavong as Preceptor, at Wat Bovornives Vihara the next year. After furthering and completing his Dhamma and Pali studies to the highest grade (grade nine), he succeeded venerable Chao Khun Phra Brahmamuni as abbot in 2503 B.E.(1960). It was therefore in carrying on the tradition of the late abbot when in 2504 B.E. (1961) he gave this series of Dhamma talks.

He was awarded the ecclesiastical title of 'Somdet' in 2515 B.E. (1972) and has held various positions in the administration of the Thai Sangha. (These more recently included: membership in the Council of Elders; Head of the management board for Mahamakut Buddhist University; Head of the National Buddhist Foundation; Head of the Foundation for Lepers, just to name a few.) He was made supreme patriarch of Thailand in 2532 B.E. (1989). Yet even in the midst of exhausting duties and responsibilities he continues his meditation practice.

The Dhamma talks were presented to both monks and lay people. Afterwards the monks would chant appropriate verses from the Pali texts and finally there was a period of group meditation. They were therefore, not just lectures but a guide for those listening to actually put into practise.

A translation such as this has many difficulties, not the least of which being the profundity of the subject and the inadequacy of our understanding and translating abilities. We therefore hope readers will test and check these teachings out in their own practice and experience.

This translation is respectfully dedicated to the venerable author who gave 'new life' by ordaining us as *bhikkhus* and who has helped so many of us from the west.

The Translators

Translators' Note

In an attempt to make this translation accessible to all, *Pali* terms have been translated. However, scholars should note that on their first occurrence the *Pali* word is usually shown in brackets and the English translation is normally consistent throughout the book. Several words were left untranslated as an English equivalent was either difficult to find or too clumsy compared to the original concept. A glossary has been included at the end of the book.

As the venerable author mentions in his Preface, he had to recap and summarize previous topics, because people often missed some of the sequence of Dhamma talks. However, this translation omits much of that repetition.

Preface

Tan Chao Khun Phra Brahmamuni (Suvaca Thera) originally organized a series of Dhamma talks at Wat Bovoranives Vihara. He would present a sermon and then, after the monks chanted, everyone would sit in meditation.

I was invited to continue with this and as I considered it beneficial I accepted the task. However, I also pointed out that I was not a meditation teacher. I still had responsibilities concerned with teaching and various other duties, and so could not fully practise developing myself, let alone attaining to a level able to train others. My Dhamma explanation therefore always had to depend on the scriptures, and if I happened to stray from them, I also felt as if I had lost my way. I had to rely on the footprints of those gone before to show the way, which I could not manage on my own.

At first, the sermons of Tan Chao Khun Brahmamuni were read out. Then, in the Rains Retreat of 2504 B.E.(1961), I started to present talks of my own. These were tape recorded and later transcribed.

The *Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, the Great Discourse on the Foundations of Mindfulness, is regularly chanted at Wat Bovoranives Vihara. I can recite all of it which helped when I was presenting my Dhamma explanation. This Discourse is a major pillar in the practice of both calm and insight, and so was chosen as the first text to present.

The Dhamma talks were given twice weekly, on the evening of the quarter moon day and the following night. As those that came to listen did not attend on every occasion, I would usually summarize and recapitulate the earlier talks.

Previously, I wrote about my reliance on the scriptures but in some places my explanation may actually differ from the normal interpretation. I nearly cut such passages out but in the end didn't, for I am sure that even if those additional thoughts which popped up of themselves are incorrect, they will receive the forgiveness of my readers for not being intentionally misleading. I will therefore leave them there for Dhamma students to investigate and consider.

These twenty-two Dhamma talks should be read and carefully considered, so as not to stray from the true way of practice in the foun-

dations of mindfulness.

The teaching presented here follows the way found in the Discourse on the Foundations of Mindfulness, which contains the essential and graduated steps of practice. It is a way which those who practise, respect and appreciate. However, some people may charge that it is inappropriate and lacking benefit because it brings a feeling of weariness and depression. It is rather likely that the people who say this are actually afraid of realizing the truth. It's similar to being fearful of the doctors's examination of one's illness or closing one's eyes to the truth. This is not a characteristic of a clever person.

If you read this book, you will discover the truth of the 'knots' and problems that exist within you. In short, this can be described as the 'knot of suffering.' You may also then see the method to unravel and safeguard against this suffering. When actually trying out this practice, you will be able to cure your own suffering in accordance with the Buddha's Teaching. You will also experience a joy unknown before.

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This book has already been reprinted many times in Thai. I therefore requested Bhikkhu Ariyesako and Bhikkhu Kantasīlo to translate it into English so as to make it more widely available. I would now like to thank them both for bringing this work to completion and I hope it will be of benefit to all.

Talk 1

Kammaṭṭhāna: The Place of Practice

Kammaṭṭhāna is a place of work, and here it means where one works on one's mind. In virtually everyone the mind is forever thinking and concocting, leading to the arising of lust (*rāga*) and greed (*lobha*), hatred and aversion (*dosa*) and to the birth of delusion (*moha*). The mind is then enveloped in the contrivings of issues and affairs and habitually smothered in defilements. Such a disquieted and unstill mind can find no peace, just as there is no rest for the waves of the sea.

The mind infiltrated with such defilements is so biassed and unbalanced that it can't recognize the truth, can't see conditions for what they really are. For instance, the mind bound up with lust or greed must incline towards the pleasant, attractive side of things, creating a predilection for a certain thing. Liking it, one becomes biassed and it will then appear 'perfect,' 'good' or 'quite nice' —depending on how much one favours it. Even if something is really not at all good, one assumes it to be so because one is attracted to it through the prejudice of lust and greed.

When the mind is warped by hatred, it will then take the negative side and turn away from things. Whatever is hated the most will then appear 'totally bad' or —according to the level of one's aversion— 'plainly bad' or 'not so good,' etc.

The mind imbued with delusion finds it even harder to see the truth. It's as if one is half-blind, seeing things only dimly. Even one's conjectures probably do not accord with the truth because the mind is already obscured with delusion.

Lust, greed, hatred and delusion not only unbalance and agitate the mind but also block the development of wisdom (*paññā*) which would be able to penetrate to the actual state of things. The Lord Buddha therefore taught about the two places which can be established for working on the mind, the two *kammaṭṭhāna*:

Samatha kammaṭṭhāna is the mind's working place to develop calm *(samatha)*.

Vipassanā kammaṭṭhāna is where the mind can attain insight *(vipassanā)* into the truth.

Working for calm is the first step because the mind needs relief from the defilements which bind and envelop it. One can then practise for insight as the tranquil mind is balanced and free from the bias of the defilements. Whatever is then investigated can be seen clearly for what it really is, and this is where insight begins to develop.

The Refuges *(Saraṇa)*

Just as the earth receives and supports our footsteps, so it is necessary, right from the beginning in developing these work places, to have a shelter and solid foundation for the mind. The mind's true refuge is the Triple Gem *(Ti-Ratana)*: the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha.

One must first determine the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha as one's true refuge, and recollect and contemplate their special virtues and qualities. Thus, the Lord Buddha is truly the Awakened One; the Dhamma is truly the Way of practice to the end of all defilements and suffering; and the Sangha are those who are truly following the Dhamma Way to its fruition. The cultivating of a profound appreciation for the qualities of the Triple Gem requires a deep understanding of what the Buddha taught: that it indubitably leads to the ending of all suffering. The more one can perceive the profundity of Dhamma the more one can appreciate the achievement of the Lord Buddha. One's mind will then go for refuge to the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha without hesitation or wavering.

Establishing one's mind in the Refuge of the Triple Gem is the preliminary step in the development of the *kammaṭṭhāna* working places. So will you all please resolve to accept this refuge for your minds, securing a trust and faith in Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha —and also a trust and confidence in your own ability to practise. This especially applies to the *kammaṭṭhāna* work which you have determined to practise. Know that it leads to calmness and tranquillity, to wisdom and insight. It is the true and certain support for your mind.

Precepts and Moral Virtue (*Sīla*)

Now the ground or foundation for the mind's support can be laid. This is moral virtue *(sīla)* which is actually the natural *(pakati)* state of the mind undisturbed by the defilements. These defilements will incite and force the mind into intending *(cetanā)* and setting into motion wrong actions through body and mind. Sometimes you may find yourself unable to maintain this natural state of mind because of business or work affairs, etc. However, once you enter the place of Dhamma practice, you must firmly resolve to refrain from wrong, unskilful behaviour. In other words, do not break the five precepts[1].

At this present time you must be especially careful to guard the natural virtue of the mind. Do not allow it to be pulled down into unskilful ways. When you can sustain this natural state of mind, you will find the mind endowed with moral virtue. Once this virtue is present, it forms the foundation on which to rest and base the mind. When your mind has such a foundation, together with a refuge safeguarding your Dhamma practice from any of the defilements' attacks, then an opportunity opens up: an opportunity to follow the way of *kammaṭṭhāna* and establish a place to cultivate your own mind.

4th August 2504 B.E. (1961)

Talk 2

The Foundations of Mindfulness: *Satipaṭṭhāna*

The Discourse on the Foundations of Mindfulness *(Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta)* directly takes up and explains the training of the mind. In fact the Lord Buddha even said that it is the only way to transcend sorrow, to see the Dhamma that needs to be seen and to come to the end of suffering with the realization of Nibbana. This, therefore, includes the perfection both of calm and insight. However, one initially needs to know about the basis of practice, the *kammaṭṭhāna*. This, as I have mentioned previously, means a place of work —a work place for the mind. It requires the determination to establish a foundation for one's practice. But where can one find this base for one's concentration?

Endeavouring to establish the mind in the affairs of external objects —a visual object, a sound, odour, taste, tangible or mental object[2]— can only lead the defilements to infiltrate the mind. The mind is then based in the defilements rather than in the *kammaṭṭhāna*. Thus the decision of exactly where to direct and base one's practice becomes crucial.

The Lord Buddha taught that we should direct our attention back inside ourselves. The foundation for the mind's development will be found right here inside ourselves and not at all in external things. To be more specific, *inside oneself* refers to the body *(kāya)*, feeling *(vedanā)*, mind *(citta)* and mental objects *(dhammā)* —all complete in each one of us.

Body *(Kāya)*

Turning one's attention back to oneself, looking from the outside in, one first comes across this body. One notices that, whether awake or asleep, a basic and essential function is breathing. There must also be one or another of such bodily postures as walking, standing, sitting or lying down. There are then the secondary positions such as, when walking, one bends the arms and legs or one turns and glances around. Even as you are sitting here now there is always a certain natural way for positioning your feet for sitting.

Then there are the other parts to this body *(rūpa-kāya)* made up of the external and internal organs, etc. Externally there is the hair on the head, body hair, nails, teeth and skin, and internally such things as flesh, tendons, bones, bone marrow, bile, kidneys, heart, etc.

These bodily constituents can all be reduced and considered in terms of elements *(dhātu)*. For example, the organs which tend to hardness come under the earth element; those which are fluid, under the water element; those that are 'heating,' under the fire element; and those that produce motion, under the wind element.

As long as all these elements are properly associated together, the whole body appears normal; but should they disperse then what's left is a *dead* body. For example, if the wind element fails then the breathing ceases. The body then becomes bloated and decays until only bones remain, and eventually even those skeletal bones will disintegrate. Before its formation this body did not exist, and so in the final event it returns to nonexistence. This is the section on the body.

Feeling *(Vedanā)*

In a living body where the elements are in harmony together there is also feeling: Pleasant feeling *(sukha-vedanā)*, painful feeling *(dukkha-vedanā)* or neutral feeling which is neither-painful-nor-pleasant *(adukkha-m-asukha vedanā)*[3]. For example, this body experiences feelings of cold and heat, of softness and hardness.

Mind *(Citta)*

An intact body, with elements smoothly functioning together, forms a support and resort for the mind. The state of everyone's mind varies. Sometimes lust is uppermost and sometimes it subsides; sometimes there is hatred or delusion and sometimes they subside.

Mental Objects *(dhammā)*

Examining the mind to a deeper level, one finds that it is always involved and concerned with various affairs, some of these being good, some bad, and some in between. These follow the principle of the *Pāli*

phrases:

Kusala dhammā	all mind objects which are wholesome.
Akusala dhammā	all mind objects which are unwholesome.
Abyakata dhammā	all mind objects which are indeterminate or neutral.

These are all found in one's mind.

So we can now say that this, these, this and these are together what makes up ***myself***, and right here is where the Discourse advises us to base our attention and mindfulness. In actual practice though, we first concentrate on just one of these bases.

Concerning the Breath

The first point is that to use the in-and-out breathing as the base for establishing mindfulness. A living body must always have breath but we never pay any attention to it. So our practice is now to bring mindfulness to bear on this natural breathing pattern.

The Lord Buddha explains (in the Discourse) that one holds the body erect[4] and firmly establishes mindfulness. Mindfully one breathes in, mindfully one breathes out. Instead of sending the mind off elsewhere, one concentrates it wholly on the breath. This will lead to a more subtle awareness. Breathing in a long breath, be aware of it. Breathing out a long breath, be aware of it. Be aware of a short in-breath and a short out-breath, but do not tense or force the breathing. Just let go and breathe naturally —but be aware.

The Discourse then continues with instruction to note the whole body. Experience and know your whole body as the breath goes in and out. Expand your awareness to cover the whole body including both the mental group *(nāma-kāya)* and the corporeal group *(rūpa-kāya)*.

Considering the mental group, be aware of the state of the mind, of the present condition of your mindfulness and concentration. How are they at this moment? Note the body through awareness of its posture and position. How are you sitting? From the soles of your feet upwards, and from the crown of your head downwards Be completely aware of your body.

After we fully accomplish this awareness of both groups, the Discourse then goes on to teach about calming the in-and-out breathing. This does not involve any forcing or holding of the breath, but is a natural calming down. When the mind becomes refined, so in turn does the breath. The Lord Buddha taught that if the mind is unquiet then the breathing will be rough and gross. However, should the mind become calm, then the breathing also becomes more refined and subtle. Sometimes the breathing may even seem to have stopped, but there is no need to panic. You have simply calmed down while the breathing still remains.

The Four Fundamentals of Practice

You must have **energy and determination** *(ātāpa)* in your practice, and this includes conscientiousness. For example, you determine to practice for a specified time period and so must therefore fulfill that aim without any slackness or cutting short. Even though you may feel frustrated and want to give up, you must carry on to accomplish your objective. With such conscientiousness everything develops smoothly and well. Thus *ātāpa* is the first essential in the practice.

The second principle is **awareness and clear-comprehension** *(sampajañña)* of oneself at all times. Don't be absent-minded or negligent by falling asleep or losing mindfulness. Permitting sleep and allowing your attention to fade indicates a lapse of clear-comprehension in your *kammaṭṭhāna* practice. This is like straying from the path and falling into a chasm or pit. Therefore, awareness and clear-comprehension must be well guarded and supported. They thus form the second fundamental in the practice.

The next principle, **mindfulness** *(sati)*, is awareness fixed and firmly established without any drifting from the chosen object[5]. Should another mental object suddenly interrupt leading to rapture *(pīti)* or excitement, then don't lose yourself in it but quickly return to your base. For example, reject all distractions and turn your full attention back to the in-and-out breathing.

Once mindfulness is well established, your practice can develop without the harm that may arise from absent-mindedly drifting away with the thoughts and moods that have arisen. The harm comes when

you too readily abandon mindfulness and become a heedless day-dreamer. Therefore, steadfastly establish your mindfulness. Don't allow it to drift away. This is the third principle.

The fourth principle is to **overcome hankering and dejection concerning the world**[6]. This is an important point, for whenever one encounters a pleasant mental object in one's practice, one must consider it as a deceit and a false perception. Likewise, if an unpleasant experience arises —such as a mental image *(nimitta)* which provokes fear— then one must again be mindfully aware that none of it is real. Being neither-glad-nor-dejected with anything that arises, one continually brings mindfulness back to the established object and anchors it there. In this way concentration *(samādhi)*[7], and eventually wisdom *(paññā)*, will arise and one's practice will progress well.

These four fundamentals are essential for everyone who practises. If they are dispensed with, the practice is thereby abandoned —with possibly harmful results. But with these principles well established, one's practice can only be beneficial and develop well.

5th August 2504 B.E. (1961)

Talk 3

Expanding and Summarizing the Section Concerning Breathing

I would now like to expand the explanation on mindfulness of breathing *(ānāpāna-sati)*. The Discourse advises sitting erect in the samadhi-posture with mindfulness alert and firmly fixed on the in-and-out breath. Various ways for developing such mindfulness are then given:

1. Breathing in a long breath one knows, 'I am breathing in a long breath.' Breathing out a long breath one knows, 'I am breathing out a long breath.'

2. Breathing in a short breath one knows, 'I am breathing in a short breath.' Breathing out a short breath one knows, 'I am breathing out a short breath.'

3. 'Experiencing the whole body, I shall breathe in,' thus one trains oneself. 'Experiencing the whole body, I shall breathe out,' thus one trains oneself.

4. 'Calming the activity of the (breath-)body, I shall breathe in,' thus one trains oneself. 'Calming the activity of the (breath-)body, I shall breathe out,' thus one trains oneself.

In the first and second stages —of breathing in and breathing out a long breath, and breathing in and breathing out a short breath— one has to realize exactly how one is breathing at that moment. This refers to the ordinary, unforced breathing which normally goes unnoticed. With careful attention one will realize that the breaths are either long or short. When fatigued or tired, one can see that the breathing becomes heavy, perhaps with panting or gasping. When the mind is upset and unquiet, one may also tend to take longer breaths than when one is calm. Breathing exercises may also involve deep breathing.

With the body rested and peaceful, the breathing becomes quieter and more refined. When the mind is also tranquil, the breathing is even more delicate and refined. At first your mindful attention on the breath may not seem to bring any fruitful results. However, with persistence the mind will become more firmly established, allowing contentment *(chanda)*, rapture *(pīti)*, and gladness *(pamojja)* to arise. This

offers you a first taste of the fruits of the tranquil mind, the mind endowed with samadhi, which will encourage you onwards in your practice.

The third stage —of experiencing the whole body with the breath— is concerned with being aware of all the corporeal group and the mental group. Be aware of your posture as you sit practising here, of the position of your hands and feet. Take note of the state of your mind and the clarity of your mindfulness and concentration. Such an awareness of the whole body indicates a broad mindfulness. This must be so refined that experiencing the whole body becomes experiencing the whole *breath*-body with each breath.

One notices, in simple terms, that the in-breath enters at the nose, passes midway at the heart and ends at the navel, whereas the out-breath starts at the navel, passes the heart and ends at the nose. This is one gauge for helping to direct one's attention. However, following the breath in and out will actually unsettle and unfocus the mind. The Lord Buddha therefore taught that one should fix the mind on that single point where the in-breath starts and the out-breath ends, i.e. where the breath contacts the nostrils or upper lip. This single point is the mark (*nimitta*) where one stations the mind. With each in-and-out breath one notes the air touching that mark (the nostrils or upper lip), and this is known as experiencing the whole body and breath-body.

This can be compared to sawing a piece of wood. Attention is focussed solely on the cutting point and not on the complete length of the saw as it moves back and forth. Seeing that one point is like seeing the whole saw and, similarly, in attending to just that single mark one experiences the whole breath. This is the third stage.

Calming the activity of the breath-body is the fourth stage of training. This does not involve any suppression or holding of breath in an attempt to force it to become more refined. Rather, it involves a strengthening of the mind's concentration and calm. When the mind is calm and refined, so is the breath. The opposite way, of stimulating and exciting the mind, achieves only tension and stress.

The practice of concentration or samadhi is for peace and tranquillity in both body and mind. When the body and mind are still, the aim of this part of the practice is reached. However, the essence here is rather in stage three (above), with the fourth stage following on from there.

Counting and "*Buddho*"

In the beginning of the practice, trying to use only the Pali (textual) instructions may be too difficult to accomplish. Therefore additional devices to engage and hold the mind have been offered. For instance, there is (mental-) counting of the breaths. This can first be done in a slow pattern by counting each succeeding in and out breath as follows:

Inhale (count) *one* ... exhale (count) *one* Inhale (count) *two* ... exhale (count) *two*

Inhale (count) *three* ... exhale (count) *three*

Inhale (count) *four* ... exhale (count) *four*

Inhale (count) *five* ... exhale (count) *five*

Then return again to counting *one—one*; *two—two*.....etc., but this time continuing the sequence so that you end with *six—six.* Repeat the sequence again, returning to *one—one* (and so on) but this time adding *seven—seven*; then back to *one—one* and then up to *eight—eight*; *one—one* then up to *nine—nine*, and finally, the completed sequence from *one—one* to *ten—ten.*

After completing a full sequence from *one* to *ten*, begin the cycle again as before, i.e. *one—one* to *five—five* and so on, until reaching *one—one* to *ten—ten* again.

When the mind is sufficiently steady, a pattern of more rapid counting can be used. This entails (mentally-) counting *one* with the inhalation and *two* with the exhalation. Continue this sequence until you reach *five.* Then, returning to *one* continue until you reach *six.* Carry on these rounds until you reach *ten.*

These counting techniques can be individually adjusted to one's own practice so as to achieve satisfactory results. One possible adaptation, for example, is to count from *one* straight through to *ten* and, having counted *ten*, return to *one* and start the cycle again.

If plain counting does not suit you then the word '*Buddho*' may be

used instead. Inhale (mentally-) reciting *'Bud-',* and exhale, (mentally-) reciting *'-dho'*. Inhale *'Bud-'*, exhale*'-dho,'* and so on.

Counting or using a mantra word such as *Bud-dho* is a useful aid in the beginning stages of the practice. It can be compared to using lined paper to guide the hand when we were first learning how to write. When a suitable degree of competence, steadiness of mind and practice has been attained, the device of counting and *Bud-dho* should be discarded, with a pure mindfulness carrying on alone. This is the general method of practice, and each practitioner should decide what is most suitable. This method is purely for the developing of calm, and will bring peace and stability to the mind.

I would like to remind you of the four fundamentals of practice: Conscientious perseverance (*ātāpa* and *sacca*), full and clear comprehension *(sampajañña)* and mindfulness *(sati)*. These are always essential to your practice.

The Benefits of Samadhi

The unquiet, restless mind wastes time and effort with its lack of application and focus. We may wish to study a book but cannot concentrate due to disturbing and proliferating thoughts. However, a mind well trained (as described above) in calm and steadfastness allows us to apply ourselves. For example, we can apply ourselves to that book and can quickly digest and understand it, with a better recall as well. Thus the gains and benefits of the trained, stabilized mind manifest not only in a passive resting of the mind in happiness, but also in whatever activity we may engage in.

1st August 2504 B.E. (1961)

Talk 4

Review of the Basic Practice

Samatha kammaṭṭhāna is the place of work to bring calmness and stability to the mind.

Vipassanā kammaṭṭhāna is where insight into the truth arises in the mind.

One begins practice by taking refuge in the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha because one is following the Lord Buddha's Dhamma rather than any other way. Faith *(saddhā)* and confidence *(pasāda)* in the Buddha —He who has opened up the Way for our practice to follow— is the *going for refuge.*

You should determine to keep at least the Five Precepts. Even your sitting here now is also to establish and improve your moral virtue. With your refuge, faith and precepts established, you can now practise for calm and insight.

The practice leading to a calm and stable mind is elucidated in the Great Discourse on the Foundations of Mindfulness *(Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta)* as mindfulness of breathing. One establishes mindfulness on the in-and-out breath, long or short (etc.), experiencing the whole body and calming the breath-body. The (Buddhist) Teachers have also offered supplementary ways: focussing the attention at one point in the breathing cycle (i.e. at the nostrils or upper lip where the breath makes contact), for example, or using counting to help, or by reciting *'Bud-dho'.* There are other variations, but they always boil down to focussing the mind in one place. When your mind becomes one-pointed, you can be sure everything is going well. But at any rate, just keep your mindfulness focussed and you will be able to make the mind one.

Characteristics of the Mind

I would like to explain a little more about the nature of the mind; how difficult it is to tame and control with its habitual jumping and racing about. Even with mindfulness fixed on a single object, it will continually buck and pull away. Where does the mind jump to? It strug-

gles around among mental objects, following after desires, wishes, attractions and the obstacles *(palibodha)* which are worries and anxieties. These external involvements are those concerns which we think and conceive about. Once they are caught up in the mind they agitate as worries and anxieties. If they are many and you are unable to throw them out, then the mind can't be pacified. However, everyone with true determination can expel them and achieve a calm mind.

The Method of Examining the Mind

Mindfulness is essential for guarding the mind right from the beginning. Any inattention, and the mind will have darted away in a flash. The mind must then be speedily led back inside if mindfulness is to be recovered.

If one checks to see why the mind had darted away, one may find the cause in something like the sound of a car, of people walking past, or the noise of something falling. The mind zips away to that particular sound and then starts to roam further afield. It may have wandered on through many varied episodes before one realizes the fact and is able to return it to one's determined point. However, should another noise intervene, the mind may then be off again —continuing on from one thing to another in what might seem like a moment even though it spans many different episodes.

Using mindfulness, always return the mind to your chosen point and, carefully establishing mindfulness, examine it there. The mind will then be pacified and, when checked in any particular episode, will usually not go off there again but will rather follow some other affair instead. This method must be repeated until the mind is tamed and able to come to calm with contentment *(chanda)*, rapture *(pīti)* and ease *(pamojja)*. This will give a taste of the first stages of calm and samadhi, furthering your satisfaction in the practice and facilitating the focussing and settling of the mind in samadhi.

Posture

Following on from the section on breathing is the section on posture *(iriyāpatha-pabba)*. Here the Lord Buddha teaches the use of clear-comprehension. When walking, one is aware of one's walking; when standing, one is aware of one's standing, and likewise with sitting or lying down. When changing position, be aware of that movement. Aim to keep up this clear-comprehension and awareness.

On close examination one finds intention *(cetanā)* present before any position is taken up, or even before one moves to change that posture. For example, there is the intention to walk or to sit. However, in the actual walking or sitting, one's clear-comprehension is liable to be broken by the mind's straying away in thinking of other affairs. Therefore, make sure that clear-comprehension is aware and safeguarding any posture you are presently in.

Clear Comprehension *(Sampajañña)*

Another section (*sampajañña-pabba*) also deals with clear-comprehension, classifying the major postures in a more detailed way. Be aware of what you are doing. At the moment of taking a step forward or backwards, of looking or turning, of stretching the body out or contracting it in —whatever you are doing— be clearly aware. Dressing, eating, drinking, relieving yourself: notice how these things proceed. This includes walking, standing, sitting, lying down, speaking, being silent, going to sleep and waking. This constant self-awareness is the practising of clear-comprehension. It will safeguard you from carelessness and negligence and can bring only benefit.

On Impurities (*Paṭikkūla*)

This section (*Paṭikkūla-pabba*) deals with the impure or unclean aspect of the body. One examines the body from the soles of the feet below, upwards to the crown of the head. It is surrounded and encased in skin and full of various foul and repulsive impurities.

These are the bodily parts:

hair of the head (*kesā*), hair of the body (*lomā*), nails (*nakhā*), teeth (*dantā*), skin (*taco*), flesh (*maṁsaṁ*), sinews (*nahārū*), bones (*aṭṭhi*), bone-marrow (*aṭṭhimiñjaṁ*), kidneys (*vakkaṁ*), heart (*hadayaṁ*), liver (*yakanaṁ*), diaphragm or membranes (*kilomakaṁ*), spleen (*pihakaṁ*), lungs (*papphāsaṁ*), large intestines (*antaṁ*), small

intestines (*antaguṇaṁ*), undigested food (*udariyaṁ*), excrement (*karīsaṁ*), bile (*pittaṁ*), phlegm (*semhaṁ*), pus (*pubbo*), blood (*lohitaṁ*), sweat (*sedo*), fat (*medo*), tears (*assu*), skin grease (*vasā*), spittle (*kheḷo*), nasal mucous (*singhāṇikā*), oil of the joints (*lasikā*) and urine (*muttaṁ*).

These number thirty-one but the Lord Buddha also pointed to the brain-in-the-skull (*matthake matthaluṅgaṁ*), which makes thirty-two bodily parts in all.

Even though the Lord Buddha actually intended this teaching for the monks *(bhikkhu saṅgha)*, it still remains very much the truth concerning the various parts of this body, and lay people might therefore adapt this manner of examination for themselves. He pointed out that this body is so compounded that it must become rotten and putrid, as is seen when it becomes a corpse. But when it can still be nurtured and supported then one can also manage to depend on its support. This impure aspect is not usually observed unless one examines it to see for oneself —when it's always ready to manifest.

All of this is concerned with calming and assuaging the mind from its satisfaction and passionate attachment for one's own and other people's bodies. If you wish to realize this calm then use the method of this section for examination and contemplation. It is especially important in your samadhi practice, when the abating of such attachment for both your own and other people's bodies becomes vital. This, then, is one strategy to help in the firm establishing of your mind in calm and tranquillity.

12th August 2504 B.E. (1961)

Talk 5

Two Methods of Calm (Samatha)

I have already explained two methods for making the mind calm and stable. There is mindfulness of breathing, which centres the mind in one-pointedness through awareness set on the in-and-out breaths; and mindfulness of the body *(kāyagatā-sati)* which uses examination of the various bodily components to penetrate to their impure nature.

The Elements *(Dhātu-kammaṭṭhāna)*

Another method is the examination of the elements. 'Element' *(dhātu)* here refers to *having similar characteristics* rather than to *coming from the same root*. Thus those body parts that are hard are referred to as the earth element *(paṭhavī-dhātu)*; those parts that are fluid are referred to as the water element *(āpo-dhātu)*; those that are warming are the fire element *(tejo-dhātu)*; and those that are in motion, the wind element *(vāyo-dhātu)*.

We previously analysed the body into thirty-one or thirty-two internal and external components, whereas for the elements we analyse them in the following manner:

1. **The earth element** is the head hair, body hair, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones, bone marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, membranes, spleen, lungs, large gut, small gut, undigested food and excrement.

All of these and any other bodily parts that are hard are designated as the earth element.

2. **The water element** is the bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, skin grease, spittle, mucous, oil of the joints and urine. Any other component parts that are fluid can be designated as the water element.

3. The **fire element** is that heat which warms the body *(yena santappati)*; the heat which causes the body to decline and deteriorate *(yena jiriyati)*; the heat which makes the body feverish *(yena pariḍayhati)*; and digestive-heat for whatever we eat, drink, chew or taste *(yena asitapītakhāyitasāyitaṁ sammāpariṇāmaṁ gacchati)*. Any

thing else in the body that has a heating characteristic is designated as the fire element.

4. The **wind element** is the upward-blowing wind *(uddhaṅgamā vātā)*; the downward-blowing wind *(adhogamā vātā*); the wind in the abdomen (*kucchisayā vātā*); the wind in the bowels (*koṭhasayā vātā*); the wind that courses through all the limbs (*aṅgamaṅgānusārino vātā*) and the in-and-out breathing (*assāsopassāso*). Any other part which has a moving or blowing quality is designated the wind element.

5. The **space element**. In other discourses the space element (*ākāsa dhātu*) is presented as the fifth element, this being the empty spaces and cavities of the body: the ear canals (*kaṇṇacchiddaṁ*); the sinuses (*nāsacchiddaṁ*); the mouth orifice (*mukhadvāraṁ*); the gullet (*yena ca asitapītakhāyitasāyitaṁ ajjhoharati*); the space where the food remains (i.e. the stomach) (*yattha ca... ...santiṭṭhiti*); the orifice from where the food is expelled (i.e. the rectum) (*yena ca ....adhobhāgā nikkhamati*). Any other empty space or cavity in this body are also designated as the space element.

Separating-out One's Elements

It is quite normal for each one of us to be attached to his or her body, thinking of it as *myself*. Now we must examine it in terms of elements, separating all the hard parts out as earth element, the fluid parts as water element, the warm parts as the fire element, the airy parts as the wind element and the empty spaces as the space element. That which we adhered to as *me and mine* will then be seen as elements.

Analyse your body and take out each element, one at a time. Take out all the hard parts, leaving the other elements together. Now remove the water and then the fire element, and you are left with the wind element. And when that is taken out then all that remains is empty space.

Methods of Separating the Elements

One can examine the elements following the Lord Buddha's Way (as above) or one might use a modern scientific analysis reducing everything to molecules and atoms. After removing each of the elements, one finally finds that of all that which one had been attached to and thought of as *me and mine,* the only thing remaining is the space element. Just empty space with no *me and mine* or *self*.

This analysis of elements is one strategy to use in curbing attachment to this body which manifests as *me and mine*, and as *myself*. The situation is just the same with external things where other people and other things have the same nature and properties. One can then release one's attachment for people and things and abandon one's thinking in terms of *self*. The mind then calms and is firmly settled.

This is one method in the practice of calm. However, both mindfulness of the body (which we have already dealt with) and this analysis of elements is calm mixed with insight. This insight will arise, without any pretension, out of the analysis when the elements are clearly seen for what they really are —no creature, no person, no *myself* or *their self*. The mind previously absorbed and suffering in its *me-ness and mine-ness* will allow everything to come to calm. This is the factor leading to a calm and cool mind.

Stillness and Peace — or Thinking

The examination of the bodily parts and elements does not bring one-pointedness of mind because it requires an active analysis and investigation. In mindfulness of breathing however, the aim is for one-pointedness, so one does not use investigation. Use whichever method seems most appropriate to you at the time. Sometimes your mind might be content with stillness and at other times it will want to think. When your mind tends to stillness, use mindfulness of breathing. However, if it likes to go out, thinking of this and that, then instead of giving it a free rein arrange a tour for it in your own body. Keep it within these bounds: From the soles of your feet up to the tips of the hair on your head, circumscribed within the skin. As it travels there, examine the bodily parts or the elements.

This Body as a Work Book

The study of calm and insight is in fact the study of this body. It's

much like the student doctor with his big text book— which is just this very body. All his studies are contained here. The practice of calm and insight is similar to this, but with the objective being a firmly established, calm mind together with a clear seeing and true insight. And a final letting-go.

19th August 2504 B.E. (1961)

Talk 6

Concentrating on a Single Object

I have already explained about stabilizing the mind by way of calm using various techniques: mindfulness of breathing, mindfulness of the body and examination of the elements. The choice rests with the practitioner. When one decides to establish the wandering mind in one-pointedness, mindfulness of breathing can be used. Should the mind wish to go roaming, let it explore the body or elements. However, mindfulness should focus and remain with each object until it is clearly discerned. For example, moving one's concentration through the body, one examines the hair of the head and body, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews or bones. One might take *bones* as a single object and through fixing one's mindfulness see them as one's own skeleton. This is centring the mind in one place.

Reflection on a Corpse

Previously, I have been referring to the scrutiny of the living body, but the lifeless body or corpse can also be examined. Compare this body with the corpse abandoned in the cemetery for one, two or three days —bloated and festering until only mouldering bones remain. One's contemplation of this will give rise to a weariness, a disenchantment and then bring calm to the mind. With practice one then becomes accustomed to corpses and unafraid of them. This is another method which uses reflection or examination.

Two Types of Samadhi

Briefly speaking, there are two types of concentration: threshold or neighbourhood concentration *(upacāra samādhi)* and absorption concentration *(appanā samādhi)*. The type of samadhi where the mind explores and examines brings one only to the threshold because the mind is not yet one-pointed, whereas the type that centres in one-pointedness as absorption samadhi is firm and unwavering. Concentrating on the in-and-out breathing, even the establishing of mindfulness on one specific part in the body, can also lead to absorption samadhi.

The Instruments for Practice

The instruments for one's practice must include applied-thought *(vitakka)* and sustained-thought *(vicāra)*. Applied-thought is the capability of applying the mind to the meditation object of samadhi, while sustained-thought is the sustaining and engaging of the mind together with the meditation object.

When concentrating on the breath, one must direct and apply the mind at the nostrils or upper lip, where the air enters and leaves. Sustained-thought is then used to keep the mind firmly engaged on that single point. Whenever one is careless in one's practice and mindfulness is lost, the mind will dash away. Applied-thought must then be used again to catch and return the mind to its former station, engaging and sustaining it there without allowing it to fall away to another object.

The Lord Buddha compared applied-thought with the sound of a bell when first struck, while sustained-thought was likened to the reverberations of the bell. Both of these are always necessary in one's practice. Applied and sustained thought are essential because the mind is continually liable to slip away from the meditation object, requiring applied-thought to lift it back and sustained-thought to sustain and engage it there. When this is constantly practised, the mind becomes pacified and stationary so that the fruits of samadhi can start to appear: a pervading rapture *(pīti)* and, even more than that, when ease *(sukha)* arises throughout one's whole body and mind. With contentment of both body and mind the mind becomes unwaveringly centred on one single object: This is one-pointedness *(ekaggatā)*.

When one has yet to experience the rewards of rapture and happiness, then one's practice will tend to feel frustrating and tiresome. However, with the continued development of applied and sustained thought, rapture and happiness will arise and then the one-pointedness of samadhi will be born as the first fruits of one's samadhi practice. This by itself will give satisfaction in one's practice and enable it to develop and flourish.

The points to note in my talk today are as follows: Applied-thought lifts and directs the mind to the samadhi object. Sustained thought engages and sustains the mind together with the meditation object. Then rapture and ease of body and mind will arise followed by the one-pointedness of mind which is samadhi.

20th August 2504 B.E. (1961)

Talk 7

Summarizing the Body Section

Today, I will complete my explanation concerning the section on the body in the Discourse on the Foundations of Mindfulness. I would therefore like briefly to summarize some of the main points in review. Even though the Lord Buddha actually taught this Discourse to monks, those lay people proposing to calm their minds may also use this practice to advantage and receive the resultant happiness.

The Lord Buddha taught that one must first establish mindfulness inside one's own body. As there are so many different organs and parts, the examination takes up one part at a time. On establishing mindfulness inside the body one recognizes that breathing is a natural experience common to everyone. He therefore taught to breathe in-and-out mindfully. One should be aware of the breath's length, but concentrate on just one point (at the nostrils or upper lip) rather than following the breath along. The mind, the body and the breath will all become calmer and more refined; yet even though you may feel that the breathing has actually stopped, do not release your concentration from its established point.

There are two ways of taking up another part of the body for examination. One way is to leave the breathing and turn to concentrate on some other part. Another way is to retain mindfulness of breathing as an anchor and then couple it with the contemplation of a part of the body. This combined contemplation can only be used while the mind has yet to reach one-pointedness. At this stage one can use thinking as a helper in restraining the mind from going outside. When it wants to go out then let it go into this body.

You should also be aware of other areas. Note your posture and inspect your body to see how it is positioned. Notice the present posture, if you are sitting for example, and then the various sub-positions, such as how the feet and hands are placed. Being clearly aware of all of this is clear-comprehension (*sampajañña*).

After being aware of the body's posture, one can then scrutinize the body itself more closely by examining its component parts and organs. Some parts are directly discernible to the eyes (such as the hair, nails, teeth, and skin) and some cannot be seen (such as the flesh, sinews, bones and the various internal organs.) One can start off by examining them all in general or go straight in to pick out and closely inspect each part. This depends on your own preference.

After examining the body's component parts, one can view them to a deeper level by analysing them in terms of elements. Extract out the hard parts as earth element, the fluid parts as water element, the warming parts as fire element, and the blowing parts as the wind element. The remaining empty spaces are the space element.

If the body and its elements were actually separated in this way then *this assemblage* or body would be no more and life would be lost. However, when the elements associate together then this assemblage is present and alive. It is breathing, it changes its posture, and its various external and internal parts are in order and working together. This, then, is the body we have here now.

One can further investigate and see that when the elements dissociate, the wind element will expire and with it the in-and-out breath. After the wind element, the fire element extinguishes, leaving the once-warm body cold. Then the water and earth element will gradually disperse until nothing remains except the empty spaces of the space element. Before each one of us was born this body did not exist, and eventually it must also return to nothingness.

The Nine Cemetery Contemplations

Carrying one's investigation on to another level, one finds that once the wind and fire elements are lost, the body ends up being called a *corpse*. That corpse isn't anything other than this body. When the elements are assembled together, it's a living body, when they have dispersed, it's a corpse.

Although the Lord Buddha taught us to examine this body, actually to see the corpse within it is difficult. He therefore explained the use of a real corpse so as to be able to compare the two. Everyone has, at one time or another, had to come across someone dying or a corpse.[8]

Nowadays, however, the corpse goes through so much dressing and making-up that its true nature does not appear. Therefore, we have to rely on these guidelines:

1. Reflect on a corpse dead for one, two or three days: bloated, turned an ugly green colour and festering.

2. Next contemplate on the corpse thrown away (in a charnel ground) being devoured by many animals: the crows, vultures and ravens, dogs and jackals tearing at and eating the corpse.

3. From there consider the corpse stripped of its flesh by the animals but with the skeleton still smeared with blood and flesh and held together by the tendons.

4. And further consider the skeletal corpse devoid of flesh yet still spotted with blood and held together by the tendons.

5. From there consider the skeletal corpse devoid of flesh and blood, yet held together by the tendons.

6. Then consider that skeletal corpse with all its holding tendons gone, the former skeleton now scattered here and there. The bones of the feet have gone one way, the bones of the hands another. The thigh bones, pelvis, spinal vertebrae, ribs, breast bone, arm bones, the shoulder blades, the neck vertebrae, the jaw, the teeth and finally the skull have all come apart in different directions. They are now just bare bones.

7. ...yet those bones are recent and therefore still white...

8. ... and after a year passes they are reduced to being just heaps of old bones.

9. Then the bones rot and decay and become dust; blown and scattered by the wind so that they cannot even be called bones anymore.

The examination as taught by the Lord Buddha takes this body up part by part. Examine a living body and foresee how it too must inevitably be without life. The fear that may sometimes arise in this contemplation usually comes from lack of knowledge. This ignorance and lonesomeness makes one imagine that there is harm or danger lurking. But when one discerns what it is all about —and that in truth there's no danger involved— then that fear will fall away. Once you have mastered your timidity then you will be someone eager and brave for the truth, no longer afraid of ghosts and the like.

Inspecting the House

My explanation of the investigation of the body requires the mind to make an inspection tour. This is much like moving to a new house which also needs an initial inspection. One tours the whole house to check out where everything is. However, this does not mean one must always be on the move, continually inspecting as if one did not need to rest. When one really needs to rest, to sit or lie down, then one must stop in one place. The complete inspection of the house finished allows one to choose, according to one's preferences, exactly where to place the chair or bed so one can rest. The Lord Buddha, therefore, offered many different methods which I have been explaining here. He pointed out the way to enter into this body and inspect it in its entirety. When in need of rest, one can then sit or lie down where one is comfortable. One can repose on the breath by settling mindfulness on a single point there, or rest in any one of the thirty-two parts of the body. One establishes a single focus, for example, in the bones until the skeleton manifests. Otherwise, you can contemplate the corpse. Whatever aspect appeals to you —be it living or dead— that is up to you.

If you are satisfied with the breath as the mark, then centre your mind unwaveringly on just one single point there. If the mind wants to move around then let it tour through the other parts —but make sure it stays within the body. Otherwise you can use both together, but this is not yet samadhi, for that requires a centring, a gathering together at one point.

26th August 2504 B.E. (1961)

Talk 8

The Body: Inside and Outside Arising and Disappearing

Would you all now centre mindfulness inside your own body. The mind may now try to escape, going out and involving itself in various worries. This happens because everyone tends to have concerns about his or her work, family, home or other areas. Use mindfulness and clear-comprehension. Be determined to set your worries aside and lead the mind to collectedness inside your own body.

You may fix your concentration at the nostrils or upper lip or on any of the other objects which I have explained previously. According to the Discourse (*Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*), being aware of the breath is concerned with knowing the internal and the external, and knowing the arising and the disappearing.

Observing the external according to the conventional understanding means knowing the breath's contact point at the nostrils or upper lip. This conventional frame of reference is one which everyone who watches that point will experience and this is called seeing the external.

Looking at the internal with the ultimate understanding is the seeing that the very breath is made up of the four elements. Hold your hand near your nose so that the exhalation strikes it. You will then feel some *hardness* in the contact, some *blowing*, some *moistness* and some *warmth*. The experience of hardness is the earth element; moistness is the water element; blowing, the wind element; and warmth, the fire element. Though this is just the breath, from a more profound viewpoint it is composed of the four elements. This is called seeing the internal. Looking at the external with conventional understanding (*sammati*) one sees the breath. Looking at the internal with ultimate (*paramattha*) understanding there are the four elements.

Taking this now onto another level where the seeing of the breath is the external, whereas the seeing of the mind is the internal. This latter is the concentrating of the mind, fixing it so that the mark or sign arises. It is similar to a photograph: the object filmed being external, and the image on the lens or on the film being internal. Focus your mind to see the external and the internal.

When you concentrate in this way, you will see arising and disappearing. Breathing-in is the arising. Breathing-out is the disappearing. The inhalation is also actually the bringing in of the four elements and the exhalation is the removing of them. This then, is an arising and a disappearing every time you breathe.

While people are still breathing, they are attached to the various things, but when that breathing ends so does their conscious recognition of clinging to anything. The aim of the Lord Buddha's Teaching about seeing the body in the body is therefore to see and be aware of the internal and the external, the arising and the disappearing. Be aware of the existence of your body, especially of the breathing, but only to the extent necessary for knowledge and to establish mindfulness. Let go and do not grasp at anything. Be aware that *this body exists* and *this breath exists* and at the same time release everything. Let go. Empty your mind and make it clear and at ease. Firmly establish your mindfulness on the object you have fixed upon.

Feeling (*Vedanā*)

Sitting here in practice you may experience some discomfort or pain. You may ache or feel stiff or you are being bitten by mosquitos, or else you may feel restless and fidgety. Even though you may have physical pain and mental pain, just be aware of whatever is painful. Bodily discomfort, mental discomfort —why is there distress? One can find the cause in the material or carnal things, the baited hooks or *āmisa*. Realize that these are the things which cause the various forms of suffering. If you feel some mental discomfort —perhaps a stifled or oppressed feeling— and your mind won't settle down, then examine to find its cause. You may find that your mind is concerned with numerous anxieties and is unable to come to collectedness. Or the cause may be in that you have never practised tranquillity meditation before and the mind still runs off here and there. It has never been still before and therefore is not satisfied with such a state. Be aware that there is al-

ways a cause, a baited-hook, present in the things that come in and bring suffering. When you are settled into your practice and experience bodily and mental pain, look to see where it originates. Do not submit to the pain but keep up the practice according to one's original intention. That pain will then gradually fade and the mind's foundation will be established more firmly so that such stability brings forth happiness.

When you experience a pleasant feeling of either body or mind, then be aware of it as such. You may experience a cooling breeze which refreshes your body, and no ache or stiffness is present. Consider what caused this pleasant bodily feeling. If it came from the environment, the weather and such like, or your aches left when you changed your posture, then realize that this is still material, baited-hook pleasure. It is all dependant on external things.

Be aware of the cause of any pleasant mental feeling. Sometimes it may arise when the mind dashes out to some pleasurable involvement outside and is lost therein. You can then see its dependence on external things: This is baited-hook pleasure. However, when the mind is steady and centred in calm with rapture, with ease and bodily and mental happiness present, then this is a nonmaterial happiness *(nirāmisa)*. This is pleasure independent of external baited attractions. That bodily ease should also be seen as arising from the mind's state of calm and not from external material things.

As the mind steadily stabilizes, that pleasure will become more and more stilled and refined until it is experienced as neither-painful-nor-pleasant. The mind is then firmly centred. This neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling is independent of external things.

When using mindfulness of breathing in your samadhi practice you must also note the feelings that arise. At first they will be painful and then they will subside and pleasant feeling will be experienced. When this becomes more and more refined, pleasant feeling will fade, and intermediate, neither-painful-nor-pleasant, feeling will arise. At this level of practice the mind is established and firm, but there is still a need to check that the baited, externally fed, feelings of either pain or pleasure do not arise. One's level of calm will then bring a nonmaterial happiness which should be used to encourage one's contentment in practice. However, do not also become attached to that happiness. Just aim for one-pointedness of mind.

27th August 2504 B.E. (1961)

Talk 9

The Body and Feeling: Together in Review

The cultivation of the mind aims for a steady, calm mind and a penetrative insight into the truth. I have explained this, stage by stage, following the Lord Buddha's Way set forth in the Great Discourse on the Foundations of Mindfulness, this being the only way to realize one's aim. Even His other Teachings can be summarized into this form. Therefore, we shall reconsider this way of practice right from the beginning. Centre the mind and focus on your own body and feelings.

Seeing the whole body concerns: mindfulness of breathing; knowing the whole body, both the mental group and the corporeal group; calming the mind, body and breath; being aware of one's present posture; examining the external and internal bodily parts and organs; reducing those to their elements; seeing that with the dispersal of the elements what remains is a corpse in its varying stages of decomposition, until there in nothing left to assume as body. This examination of one's body is a wide-ranging, overall inspection, while the practice of samadhi requires the resting of the mind in any one particular bodily part. For example, if one finds that mindfulness of breathing suits one then concentrate on that one point.

In the initial stages of practice there will be pain in both body and mind. There are the aches from sitting in unaccustomed positions and the mind's discomfort from being forced to be still and calm when it has never practised before. Realize that this is painful feeling arising in outside attractions with their baited hook. Past bodily comfort and that feeling of pleasure are then used to lure it into pain. The mind habitually-thinking-as-it-likes is distressed when it is forced to gather into calm. However, with patience, persistence and unwavering determination, such pain will fade away and happiness will arise. The body will then be at ease and the mind serene.

But on no account can mindfulness be allowed to lapse. If it is lost then the mind will race out and grab hold of external objects. Whenever you catch the mind engrossed in such pleasures then fully realize that this is *baited-hook pleasure* and based in external attractions. Be similarly aware of that bodily pleasure based on an external lure. These things that induce the mind to dodge outside are of critical importance because on going out it does not stop at just one excursion. The sound of someone walking or speaking, or of a car or some other noise, may immediately lead the mind away, and then it will continue on into myriad involvements. Do not allow the mind to become engrossed in these external attractions with their baited hooks. Should you catch the mind in such pleasures, then realize their origin and bring it back to the object of your samadhi, to one-pointedness.

Sometimes a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling may similarly arise from the mind's excursion into external involvements. So make yourself aware of this.

Always be watchful and lead the mind back to its samadhi object so that it becomes stilled and free from sensuality and all unwholesome states. You can then be confident that the happiness which you experience is completely untainted by external lures and is born from tranquillity. This happiness gives a taste of the initial stage of practice. However, do not lose yourself in it, but continue to steady the mind in the samadhi object.

Focussing and Setting the Mind

After understanding feeling as I have explained, now turn inwards to the mind itself. Look and note its condition, its state and disposition. As you focus there you will experience that the feeling shifts into the mind as well —but only if you watch carefully. You will find that any bodily distress runs into the mind, while any mental distress is already directly concerned with the mind. This gives rise to dislike which is also known as hatred or aversion *(dosa)*. However, I feel that this word seems a little too strong so we will use 'dislike'. It has a broad meaning because everyone dislikes suffering. Suffering, once present, leads to the arising of dislike and as it intensifies so the aversion arises more sharply. Therefore this dislike, or what can be called aversion, arises through painful bodily and mental feeling *(dukkha vedanā)*. When something is contacted, then bodily and mental pain must arise before it

becomes a matter for aversion. Painful feeling is therefore the fuse for aversion and dislike. When this is the case, be aware that the mind is possessed with hatred or aversion, that dislike has already arisen in the mind.

In the opposite case, pleasant bodily and mental feeling *(sukha vedanā)* will lead to liking. One might also call this lust *(rāga)* but again it seems rather too strong a word. 'Liking' may seem too general a term but just understand that it refers to the beginning of lust. Lust here starts with the subtle forms of attachment and hankering, everything which involves liking. Every type of fondness, or one may call it lust, therefore first springs from pleasant feeling. The contact that brings bodily and mental comfort and ease immediately leads on to hankering, attachment and lust. Therefore be aware whenever these have arisen in your mind.

That feeling which is intermediate —neither-painful-nor-pleasant *(adukkha-m-asukha vedanā)*— refers to the experiencing of whatever is already familiar. At the experience of something new, a pleasant feeling may arise, as when one acquires something one hankers for. However, after the initial excitement has faded, one may begin to feel quite indifferent towards it and this is neutral feeling. This feeling then shifts into the mind where it creates an attachment to that thing. Such attachment, developing from an initial excitement into an indifferent feeling, is really a type of deception because the object is still not released. This grasping, which is a stinginess and jealous guarding makes that object impossible to relinquish. Even though the object no longer thrills and excites, it can still not be given up. It's like all those other things we own and have squirrelled away. This attachment is a form of deception. When it arises in your mind be aware that delusion *(moha)* is present.

Pleasant and painful feelings flash to and fro, inciting the springing forth of liking or disliking, but this intermediate feeling is discernible only if one carefully examines the underlying ground. One will then come to appreciate its great extent. The mind is, in fact, deceived and attached to many of these intermediate experiences which lack any of the flashing back and forth of pleasure-and-fondness and pain-and-dislike. See the truth of all of this in your own mind.

At the opposite pole also be aware when the mind is free and unstained by lust, hatred and deceiving attachment. When the mind cannot be established in the samadhi practice of mindfulness of breathing, this is because of its wandering out with liking, hating, and deceiving. It's therefore always necessary to keep a watch on your mind and to realize when it has wandered away. That awareness will allow the mind to return to calmness.

At this stage in your practice, discouragement or restless and fretful thoughts may arise. Be aware of such feelings and steadily lift the mind so that it brightens and takes heart. Otherwise realize that such dejection arises only because one has yet to receive the happiness resulting from tranquillity. Do not, therefore, give up on the practice. Do not indulge in those restless whirling thoughts, but use mindfulness to bring everything back.

On some occasions your mind may be expansive and broad. Be aware of it. Also be aware should the mind ever become narrow and cramped. The expansive mind has high spirits which must be moderated with mindfulness if they should go to excess. If the mind becomes too narrow and cramped then it will make for suffering so one must carefully not let this happen. A lot of happiness may make the mind over-expansive and too high spirited, whereas too little may make it narrow and cramped. Such extremes must therefore be avoided for the sake of what is just right and most suitable.

Sometimes the mind will feel unsurpassable —when, for example, one wants to work and practise as hard as possible— whereas sometimes the mind appears clearly surpassable, even rather slack. This can lead to negligence. In these cases one must also adjust, with a give-and-take attitude, so that they balance out just right. Do not think that you can be extra-superior, for you will thereby also become overhasty. Similarly, do not allow too much slackness and negligence. Carefully balance them together and as one's practice progresses then take it steadily, stage by stage.

Sometimes the mind will be steady and established, and at other times it will lack this quality. Be aware of this. The well-established

mind is right and good, but you must examine to see the reason if it should waver and wander away. There must be something lacking, some omissions in your practice which stop it from stabilizing. You must find the causes and bring the mind back to stability.

Sometimes the mind is liberated, and at other times it is unliberated. At the mundane level this refers to releasing, letting go of something and achieving calm in one's practice. When the mind cannot pass beyond, it means one cannot relinquish, and the mind keeps returning to outside involvements, been concerned about one's work, for example. If you allow the mind to go on in this way, then your practice won't be productive. When sitting in practice you must therefore always succeed in your efforts to release yourself from those external entanglements and worries, and bring the mind back to calm. This can then be called the mind gone beyond. This state of mind free from external preoccupations will then smooth the way for your sitting practice. You must therefore maintain a constant vigilance concerning the state of your mind.

Understanding the way of practice expounded by the Lord Buddha means being aware of the body, being aware of feeling and being aware of the mind. Establish one of them —such as mindfulness of breathing—as a basis for the practice of samadhi. But for that practice to progress, an awareness of feeling and mind will also on occasion be required. You must be able to focus on feeling and the mind with its involvements in order to steady the mind and firmly establish it in the chosen object.

3rd September 2504 B.E. (1961)

Talk 10

The Section on Mental Objects (*dhammā*)
The Five Hindrances (*Nīvaraṇa*)

Our cultivation of the mind is aimed both at firmly establishing calm and at developing the arising of true wisdom and insight. We depend on the practice as laid down by the Lord Buddha which I have been explaining in stages.

We begin by developing calm and firmly establishing the mind. If you are happy with mindfulness of breathing then focus on the in-and-out breath, as I have already explained. While practising, you must also note feeling and mind because if the mind has not yet reached one-pointedness, the various sense-bases are still active. The ear hears sounds, the body receives the touch of objects and because the mind is still not firmly centred, mental objects will arise. The feelings which arise go immediately to the mind where the painful feeling brings disliking, the pleasant feeling brings liking; and the intermediate feeling brings delusion and attachment. Constant mindfulness is needed to watch over all of this to make one's concentration firm and centred.

When your effort to help establish and centre the mind fails or else does not progress in developing samadhi, then you must see where the obstruction lies. The Lord Buddha called these obstacles the hindrances *(nīvaraṇa)*. They bar the mind from samadhi and you should be aware of their features. There are five hindrances:

1. Sensual desire *(kāmacchanda)*: Satisfaction in external objects as being worth desiring and wishing for. When such desire is present, it leads the mind out and prevents its concentrating, thereby thwarting samadhi.

2. Ill-will *(byāpāda)*: Dislike for the practice or for external objects. When the mind is darkened by ill-will or dislike then it is a danger to samadhi.

3. Sloth and torpor *(thīna-middha)*: Drowsiness and discouragement which dull the mind and make the body sluggish and lethargic. When this hindrance arises it is a danger to samadhi.

4. Restlessness and worry *(uddhaccakukkucca)*: Fretfulness and agitation concerning external objects or caused by rapture arising from the practice. This annoyance mixed with dislike makes one feel fretful and makes samadhi impossible.

5. Sceptical doubt *(vicikicchā)*: Wavering and uncertainty concerning one's motivations for practising and concerning the method and fruits of practice. For example, one has misgivings about whether one should practise at all, or one questions why one is doing it, for what advantage. The danger to one's immediate practice is the vacillation about which of the various methods I have explained; whether one should adopt one from the section concerning the body, or feeling or mind. To be uncertain about choosing the right way displays a doubt about the way of practice. This makes the mind vacillate and samadhi becomes impossible. One may also be unsure about the benefits of practice or about whether certain things will appear. These anticipations and expectations about future results, or about seeing various things, are a danger to samadhi.

You must therefore look at your mind: What state is it in at this moment? Is the inclination *(chanda)* towards external things or is there already some towards the object of samadhi? If the inclination is still mostly towards the external, then there won't be any for the internal and samadhi will be difficult to achieve. One must therefore arrest such zeal for externals and endeavour instead towards the object of samadhi. It does not matter so much that zeal towards the samadhi-object has not yet arisen, for that will come of itself once some of the fruits of samadhi are gained.

Examine your mind for the darkness of dislike. Is it all caught up in those external objects which cause dislike? Is it starting to build up dislike towards the practice? If you indeed find that such is the case, then endeavour to restrain those disturbing objects and reject the dislike for the practice. The putting down of such dislike avoids the subsequent prejudice and bias to the point where you can experience the merits of samadhi when such dislike subsides. This is similar to disliking a person or thing because one has noticed only their faults and bad points. Whenever one manages to see their good qualities then that dislike will be stilled. Your reluctance and dislike for the practice will therefore disappear when you have actually experienced samadhi.

Now, when the impulse and aversion towards external objects subside and reluctance about the samadhi object diminishes, the mind will come to calm. Another antagonist to that calm will then appear: drowsiness. The state of calm and this drowsiness are very similar. This becomes evident when one calms the mind —listening to a Dhamma talk, for instance— and one also feels drowsy. The untrained mind is usually characterized by restlessness, or if it's not restless, it's drowsy. Thus there is a need to take great care that one doesn't doze-off, which would effectively extinguish any mindfulness. Mindfulness, recollection and awareness are always essential for the development of samadhi. As the samadhi becomes more refined, one's clear-comprehension and mindfulness must be clearer and more subtle. The greater clarity of one's awareness promotes an equally greater steadfastness of samadhi. The practice of samadhi does not therefore aim to obtain a sort of deadened-unconsciousness. The way to solve this problem of drowsiness is by realizing its causes. It arises because one has let mindfulness and awareness slip in trying to calm the mind. When going to sleep it is much the same: One lets go of awareness and, in turn, one falls asleep. In practice, therefore, mindfulness cannot be given up otherwise sleepiness will descend. You must fully deploy awareness and mindfulness, which will prevent such drowsiness from occurring.

As soon as you feel sleepy, use this method together with a fixing on the arising of bright light. This means that it is as bright as noon in the mind through the vividness and brilliance of awareness and mindfulness. The mind is radiant with full, clear comprehension and mindfulness. There can be no dimming of this —as if one were trimming down a lantern's flame— because that can lead only to sleep.

Also, do not allow any wild and unsettling thoughts concerning the way of practice because this will abort any development of samadhi. Be sure to focus on the meditation object. If you decide on mindfulness of breathing then concentrate fully there. However, also be aware of the ways of feeling and mind, as I have already explained. This allows you to correct anything that might spoil the samadhi and also avoids

any oppression of the mind. In mindfulness of breathing this will stop any irregularity which would cause restlessness or irritation. If you give free rein for the mind to enjoy the rapture and happiness of the early fruits of samadhi, then that excitement will lead to restlessness. Such restless and proliferating thoughts need to be constantly guarded against, as I have mentioned before.

Sceptical doubt and conjecture also need putting down. Be clear and certain in your practice without speculating on any future effects, or thinking, “What will I see? What will appear? What will it be?” Aim only to establish the mind firmly in the object of samadhi, with awareness and mindfulness full and clear. The more refined the samadhi becomes, the more sophisticated and comprehensive the mindfulness and awareness must be.

By getting to know the features and characteristics of these hindrances which bar the mind from samadhi you can prevent their occurrence. If they have already arisen, you must endeavour to wipe them out. The effort to prevent and eliminate these hindrances is what leads to progress and success in your samadhi practice.

4th September 2504 B.E. (1961)

Talk 11

Summarizing the Stages of Practice

This Dhamma Teaching is a training aid in the cultivation of the mind. It is directly concerned with you and therefore in listening to what the Lord Buddha taught, you must aim to bring it into yourself and focus on it there. When you can see the truth in yourself, then you will also be able to see Dhamma.

The practice is aimed both at calming the mind and at attaining to clear knowledge and true insight. I have been explaining this practice of calm stage by stage, but have yet to start on the way of insight. The following sections will now begin to explain the practice of insight which leads to wisdom and true knowledge. First, however, I will summarize and lead in from my earlier teaching.

Centring the mind in oneself aims at calming the mind through concentrating, for instance, on the in-and-out breath together with an awareness of the mind. In your practice have clear comprehension about posture —your sitting here now, for example— and examine the thirty-one or thirty-two parts of the body, finally analysing them as elements. When the elements disperse, the living body becomes a corpse and decomposes until only the bones remain. Eventually even those bones will completely disintegrate.

While the body is still alive, it has pleasant, painful and intermediate feelings. One must be aware that some of these feelings arise dependant on external attractions (with their baited hooks) and some are born from the practice itself. As such feelings quickly shift into the mind, one must also be fully aware of the mind. When pleasant feeling arises it brings hankering to the mind. Painful feeling will bring dejection and intermediate feeling a state of deluded attachment.

The danger of the *hindrances* lies in that they prevent the mind from making progress or becoming established in samadhi. Sensual desire, ill-will, sloth and torpor, restlessness and worry, and sceptical doubt are the culprits here. The root of these hindrances lies in various external anxieties and concerns which have not yet been shaken off, or

else in feeling itself. The pleasant feeling with its baited hook in external attractions goes into the mind where *liking* arises and this sways the mind away into those pleasing external objects. The samadhi is thus ruined. The same is true with painful feeling, which deflects the mind away through aversion, and intermediate feeling, which can bring drowsiness, restlessness and doubt. You must therefore be ever watchful and aware lest any of these hindrances start to arise.

In the beginning one must constantly be on guard, examining and combatting all the various obstacles to samadhi. One's samadhi may not yet be firmly established but such self-examination is still much better than giving the mind free rein to wander outside. It's like inspecting and surveying one's own house. At this level of practice, concentration on breathing must be combined with an examination of feeling, mind and any hindrances that might arise. It is therefore a twofold practice. Inspecting the mind in the ordinary way will often lead to one's original aim being overtaken by other, proliferating thoughts. In the beginning, thinking has to be used —but keep it inside (for instance, by using counting or reciting *'Bud-dho'* together with the breath). Such thinking is a preventive inspection to forestall any threat to the developing samadhi. When one's concentration succeeds in overcoming such dangers, one's practice of mindfulness of breathing (for example) will strengthen and become steady and sure.

The Method of Practice for Attainment Concentration (*Appanā Samadhi*)

At this level of practice one depends on applied and sustained thought or reflection. However, reflection here means applying the mind to the samadhi object —to the (long or short) in-and-out breaths for instance. This applied-thought can be compared to the first striking of a bell, whereas sustained-thought is the following reverberation. This sustained-thought is the supporting of the mind close to the object of samadhi without allowing it to fall away.

In practice though, the mind often tends to slip away from the samadhi object, and mindfulness must then lead it back. Applied and sustained thought will therefore be constantly needed until the mind becomes steady and established enough for rapture to pervade both mind and body. However, you should not then get carried away with this rapture. Instead, continue concentrating steadily on the samadhi object, and ease of body and mind will arise. This ease is still more refined and the mind will then be firmly centred in a single object. This is one-pointedness free of intrusive concerns and is born from detachment and peace.

The mind, having progressed this far, is at the first stage of attainment concentration: samadhi which has become fixed and established. Previous to this it was still neighbourhood concentration. This first level of attainment samadhi requires: applied thought lifting the mind to the meditation object; sustained thought supporting the mind there; rapture pervading body and mind; ease of body and mind; and one-pointedness focussed firmly on a single object. This is the happiness arising from one's samadhi practice.

In the beginning of one's practice, when one has yet to experience rapture and ease the mind cannot be firmly established in samadhi. But with the arising of rapture and ease, the samadhi becomes steadfast and one is said to experience the flavour of samadhi. One will then come to see the benefits and advantages in samadhi practice of which one was ignorant before.

Even in the activities of the world, a type of rapture and ease is needed. If they are lacking then one won't be able to continue such (external) activities, as watching a film or a play. It is similar in Dhamma practice, where the fruits of rapture and ease are necessary for the establishing of samadhi, and for further progress. This rapture and ease of samadhi is far more refined and rare than other kinds, and brings a much greater happiness and coolness to the mind.

The achieving of this rapture and ease rest with a constant developing of applied and sustained thought. Whenever you resolve to practise, try to keep it up every day. For instance, you may decide to practise each day just before retiring to sleep or on awakening each morning. Such a consistency of practice makes the mind easier to control and when it has progressed sufficiently, the fruits of rapture and ease will arise. This is followed by the first stage of samadhi, which is known as

one-pointedness. The firmly established one-pointed mind no longer needs applied and sustained thought because it is now stable in itself. Applied and sustained thought can therefore be left behind and you need not tire yourself with them. All that now remains is rapture, ease, and one-pointedness of mind.

When rapture pervades body and mind, there is still some exhilaration present. However, as the mind becomes more refined, rapture fades and is left behind, and only ease and one-pointedness remain.

As the mind continues to become more and more refined, that ease is also left behind and one then experiences one-pointedness and equanimity *(upekkhā)* which is neutral, neither painful nor pleasant. The mind is now fully established in this high level of samadhi.

However, it is not necessary for you to attain this high state of samadhi. You can consider achieving the level of applied and sustained thought, rapture, ease and one-pointedness, as doing quite well with your samadhi practice. The mind will then be able to stay in that state for as long as you want. However, as soon as you exit from that samadhi you will have to come into contact and be disturbed by various external objects and concerns until you next rest in that peaceful state. The role of samadhi is only to establish a comfortable resting place for the mind. The Lord Buddha then offered a training in the development of insight which is the wisdom clearly to see and to know the truth.

The Beginnings of Insight (*Vipassanā*)

In developing insight it is first necessary to base the mind in samadhi. Otherwise wisdom will arise only with difficulty. One follows the methods of samadhi which the Lord Buddha laid down and which I have already explained, stage by stage. Once the mind is sufficiently concentrated, one turns to investigate within oneself. One examines this *myself*: this one sitting here with such and such a name, as is commonly accepted by the world for each person. Search out: 'what is this thing so designated by that name?' Really, it is all a summing and assembling into parts and groups from the soles of the feet up to the hair on the head, all encased by skin. It is right here, within this area, where what we understand as *I-myself* appears. So search it out —Where is this *I-myself?*

The First Section Concerning the Aggregates

The Lord Buddha taught at this stage to separate out the corporeal aggregate. This comprises the whole of the body made up from the elements of earth, water, fire, wind and space together with the sensory apparatus. These can be put aside and called the physical or *rūpa* aggregate *(rūpa khandha)*.

We can now go on to inspecting the aggregate of feeling. There are painful or pleasant or intermediate (neither-painful-nor-pleasant) feelings. For example, bodily and mental feelings of contentment, bodily and mental feelings of distress, or intermediate feelings. These can be put aside and called the aggregate of feeling *(vedanā-khandha)*.

Inspect the perception aggregate, with its recognition of this and that, recalling someone's name and voice and various other subjects. These can be put aside and called the aggregate of perception *(saññā-khandha)*.

Inspect the aggregate of mental formations, thinking of this issue and that concern. These can be put aside as the aggregate of mental formations *(saṅkhāra-khandha)*.

Inspect the aggregate of consciousness which is the knowing and experiencing through the visual apparatus, auditory organ, olfactory organ, tactile organ and the mind *(mano)* which variously knows. This can be put aside and called the aggregate of consciousness *(viññāṇa-khandha)*.

The *rūpa* aggregate is one portion, the feeling aggregate is another, that of mental formations (which is this thinking) is another, and the aggregate of consciousness is another portion. Or one separates them all into the *rūpa, vedanā, saññā, saṅkhāra,* and *viññāṇa groups.* What is called *me-myself* is made up from these various aggregates. They are assembled into groups, conglomerations and into one piece. Yet separating them into different parts forms the beginning of the practice of insight. This requires a focussed examination and realization of the characteristics of each of the aggregates and you will have to come to clearly know them all.

9th September 2504 B.E. (1961)

Talk 12

Explaining the Five Aggregates

In this practice of calm and insight, the way of insight begins with an investigation into the five aggregates *(pañca-khandha)*. I will recapitulate these for you. Please centre your mind, looking inwards to see these five aggregates in yourself.

Focus so as to know about the rūpa aggregate or group, which are the great-entities and primary qualities of matter *(mahā-bhūta-rūpa)*. The hard portion being the earth element, the fluid portion being the water element, the heating portion being the fire element, the moving and blowing portion being the wind element, and the empty spaces being the space element. See that your physical body *(rūpa-kāya)* is solid because of the earth element, is moistened through the water element, is warmed by the fire element; is aired and has breath because of the wind element and has various cavities which are the space element. The properties and qualities of the physical body are called the great entities.

This body also has a sensory system. There are the visual organs, the auditory organs, the olfactory organ, the gustatory organ and the tactile sense organs. There is the condition of femininity or masculinity. There is softness and suppleness, not being stiff like a corpse. There is the display of different mannerisms of body and speech. All these various properties and qualities are termed the *derivatives (upādāya-rūpa)* or secondary properties dependent on the great-entities. The physical body made up from both the great-entities and their derivatives is together known as the corporeal or rūpa aggregate *(rūpa-khandha)*. It is that which we grasp and hold to as *me-and-mine*, as *self*, and it is therefore called the *grasping aggregate (upādāna-khandha)*.

Originating as an embryo in the mother's womb, this physical body grows and develops with food as its nutriment. This food is none other than the four elements (earth, water, fire and wind) which need to be consumed so that the body can grow and flourish. The corporeal or rūpa aggregate therefore arises dependant on food (or the four great-entities) and the body ceases when its food is ended, or through various other causes which come together to destroy it.

After examining the rūpa aggregate and understanding its properties, its arising and its disappearing, we now look into the feeling aggregate. This consists of pleasant, painful and neither-painful-nor-pleasant feelings. I'll give some examples: Should a cooling, refreshing breeze flow by while you are sitting here, this is pleasant feeling. However, if a mosquito bites or you feel an ache, this is painful feeling. Whatever feeling is left after disregarding painful and pleasant feeling is what is called intermediate, neutral or neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling. This intermediate feeling is usually the most basic one and as such is commonly present but unnoticed if one does not investigate. People normally only show interest when a painful or pleasant feeling intrudes.

Look to see exactly how feeling manifests. Examine throughout your body and you will find it in most parts. It arises because of contact *(phassa)*. That breeze touching the body and the biting mosquito are examples of contact. There must also be consciousness *(viññāṇa)* for contact to be complete. Feeling arises dependant on this completed contact which must include both the sense impression and consciousness. Lacking such contact, the feeling will disappear and this arising and disappearing is, in fact, the natural course of things. Set yourself to see the properties of feeling (vedanā); how it arises and disappears.

Now move to look at perception *(saññā)*. This is the perceiving and recognition of sights, sounds, odours, tastes, tangibles (which touch the body) and of the affairs which the mind thinks about. See these in yourself and note how perception arises. It arises dependant on contact together with feeling, and disappears through lack of contact or according to the natural course of things. Look to see these properties of perception, its arising and its disappearing.

Now move to look at the mental formations *(saṅkhāra)*. This is the thinking about sights, sounds, odours, tastes, tangibles and mental objects. See into your own thinking and realize that mental formations arise dependant on contact together with perception. They disappear according to their natural course, or because there is no more contact.

Now move on to look at consciousness *(viññāṇa)* which is the *knowing* of seeing sights or of hearing sounds (etc.). If the sense organs (which I mentioned before) are whole and functioning, consciousness is required actually to see a form (for example) in order to know that form. The auditory organ needs consciousness to know the hearing of a sound; the olfactory organ needs consciousness to know the smelling of an odour; the gustatory organ needs consciousness to know the tasting of a flavour; the mind base *(mano)* needs consciousness to know about the mental images and ideas *(dhammā)*. Consciousness is therefore overseeing all the sense bases *(āyatana)*.

If consciousness is lacking then even though the visual and auditory senses organs be whole, no form will be seen or sound heard. It's similar to a corpse: however newly-dead it may be, the visual and auditory senses will still not be able to see and hear. Consciousness is therefore what knows throughout all the senses: the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and the mind.

Consciousness arises dependant on mind-and-body or *nāma-rūpa*. Thus the body *(rūpa-kāya)* is complete and the mental group *(nāma-kāya)*, which is feeling, perception, mental formations, together with consciousness, are present and supporting each other. The body needs to be living —as it is for us here now— for consciousness to arise. If there is no *nāma-rūpa* or if it has already dispersed, then consciousness also cannot arise. Be aware of the properties of consciousness, its arising and disappearing, right here in your own self.

Feeling, perception, mental formations and consciousness are known as the grasping aggregates because we grasp and hold to each of them as *mine*, as *me-myself*.

Concerning the Sense Bases *(Āyatana)*

The normal state of affairs is for the mind to be supported in the rūpa aggregate, while for the mental aggregates *(nāma-khandha)* to arise firstly requires consciousness, that knowing of the sense-experience. The condition of contact together with consciousness then leads to the arising of feeling, perception and mental formations (or thinking). One thinks about something and the knowing about that is consciousness. Then, in circular fashion, feeling (for example) arises. Therefore the condition for the arising of the mental aggregates lies with *nāma-rūpa* or mind-and-body which conditions the arising of consciousness. By *nāma-rūpa* here I mean this corporeal or rūpa group complete with the mental group (as I have explained before). They are not defective. They have life, a nervous system and functioning sense bases. You must therefore focus on these sense bases because this is the avenue by which the mental factors arise. The sense bases *(āyatana)* comprise:

Internally the eye *(cakkhu)* or visual organ, and externally the visible form *(rūpa)* which is seen, this forms one pair.

Internally the ear *(sota)* or auditory organ, and externally the sound *(sadda)* heard, this forms one pair.

Internally the nose *(ghāna)* or olfactory organ, and externally the odour *(gandha)* smelt, this forms one pair.

Internally the tongue *(jivhā)* or gustatory organ, and externally the flavour *(rasa)* tasted, this forms one pair.

Internally the body *(kāya)* and its tactile organ, and externally whatever touches as a tangible object *(phoṭṭhabba)*, this forms one pair.

Internally the mind *(mano* or *mana),* and externally the mental-object *(dhamma)*, this forms one pair. These mental objects consist of various past sensory impressions (sights and sounds, for example) picked up by the mind as a subject to think upon.

These are called the sense bases, being that which connects and joins the internal connection to the external connection. For example, the eye (as internal connection) joins to the visual object (as the external connection).

These various sense bases are active in their connecting and joining in everyone from their awakening in the morning until their going back to sleep. For example, if you should open your eyes now,[9] then eyes and visual form must come together. Similarly, with one's ears and sounds. Some of the sounds here now will come from this Dhamma talk and some from the cars outside and various other noises. The nose and odours, the tongue and tastes, the body and tactile sensations, and the mind and thoughts (as mind objects) are each connecting up to-

gether all the time.

At the same moment there may be many different conjunctions of the sense bases. For instance, the ear may connect with many different sounds occurring at the same time. The wind may touch the body — body and tangible object in correlation— or waft some odour to the nose. Summarizing, one may say that these six pairs of sense bases are connecting up all the time and they not only join each pair together but also tie the mind in and involve that as well.

When the eye and a visual form come together, then the mind is tied in as well, bound to think and consider concerning that form. Similarly, the mind is bound into considering a sound when ear and sound join, and bound to follow after an odour when nose and smell join. On examination, one finds that everyone's mind is pulled and bound into involvements with visual forms, sounds, odours, tastes, tangibles and mental-objects —such as thoughts of past sights and sounds. The mind is thus pulled into involvements by six ways and so can't help but be restless and without peace.

Even while you sit here trying to bring the mind together in samadhi, the various sense bases still bind and pull the mind astray in myriad ways. This is what blocks any samadhi from developing. Therefore you must focus to see the characteristics of these six sense bases and realize that when they connect up in their six ways, they bind and lead the mind off on a wild race into various involvements.

Why are they able to tie the mind down? Because of heedlessness, a lapse of mindfulness, and a deficiency in true and penetrating knowledge *(ñāṇa)*. With sufficient mindfulness and knowledge, the mind cannot possibly be overcome and bound up with the sense bases. But there must be enough mindfulness and knowledge. In the beginning neither mindfulness nor knowledge is quick enough, but with practice and training they become strong and quick enough to guard against straying into the ways of the six sense bases. This is the way that calm and samadhi can be established. The mind with samadhi is then capable of seeing into the characteristics of these activities, seeing their way of operation. When you yourself can steadily inspect this racing back and forth between the sense bases and have realized their nature, they will then be unable to bind the mind into going with them. And they will then just continue on past following their own way.

10th September 2504 B.E. (1961)

Talk 13

Recapitulation of the Four Foundations of Mindfulness Internally and Externally

Firstly, will all of you centre your mind inwards to examine yourself and see what really is true at this time. This means setting the mind on your breathing and being aware of the ongoing inhalation and exhalation. It means being aware of your posture sitting with your hands and feet arranged in whatever way. Now bring the mind into examining the actual parts and organs of your body: up from the soles of the feet and down from the crown of one's head, all encased by skin. Focus and analyse those parts into elements: the hard as earth element, the fluid as water element, the heating as fire, the moving as wind and the cavities as space element. Contemplate a corpse as seen outside and then compare it with your own body —which eventually must likewise reach such a state and end finally as rotting bones. Focus into your own body in this way, both externally and internally, seeing both the arising and the disappearing.

In examining the external, one uses mindfulness to see various characteristics in their conventional appearance. Knowledge *(ñāṇa)*, which can penetrate through such appearances, is used to clearly discern the internal. Standing outside, looking at the exterior shape and characteristics of one's house is similar to the external examination, while the internal examination is more like the actual entering inside. Once inside, knowledge will be able to see through conventional appearances without being held by their superficiality.

Inside the body, this means seeing in terms of its arising and disappearing. For example, the in-breath is counted as the arising, and the out-breath as the disappearing. You must see that in every portion of this body there is a continual arising and disappearing. Look until you can actually see this right here and now. Everyone normally can see only the arising and persisting without being aware of the disappearing. For instance, we all experience being alive, and though we know that there must be a passing away, it cannot be seen here and now. Our investigation must proceed with knowledge, seeing arising followed by disappearing in the present. Being able to see this indicates we are discerning the body with knowledge and seeing the internal. In the beginning we must use mindfulness to see the external, and then we turn to the internal, the arising and the disappearing.

Whatever feeling you are experiencing at this present moment, look at it now. Is it pleasant, painful or neither-pleasant-nor-painful? Does it arise from external attractions (with their baited hooks)? If it does, then it is termed worldly, being hooked by carnal attractions *(āmisa)* but if it develops from the mind in samadhi, then it is called unworldly or spiritual *(nirāmisa)*. It is then free from those attractions with their baited hook. Therefore see the present feeling for what it really is. Looking with mindfulness sees the exterior feeling, whereas seeing with knowledge penetrates to the interior feeling or the arising and disappearing.

Look further into the mind, because feeling itself also stirs the mind. Pleasure stirs up hankering, pain stirs up dejection while neither-pleasure-nor-pain stirs up and fixes the mind in attachment, which is a condition of delusion. Seeing with mindfulness the outer mind and comprehending its properties, one then penetrates with knowledge to the inner mind to see the continual arising and disappearing.

Look at the affairs and concerns of the mind or see what conditions of mind have developed. These are what hold the mind back from samadhi and stop knowledge. They are the hindrances which block samadhi and knowledge from arising. Be aware of sensual desire if it is now present in your mind. If there is ill will, sloth and torpor, restlessness and worries or sceptical doubt —be aware of that.

Those things which become objects to draw the hindrances out into one's mind are *rūpa*. When the mind has inclined out to know them and a hindrance has arisen, then that is *nāma*. If no object comes to draw away the mind or the mind does not incline out to know about an object, then it is as if rūpa or nāma are not present, and the hindrances do not arise. It is therefore necessary in examining the hindrances to focus on rūpa and nāma to see the object and the mind inclining out to receive that object. Where does the object enter in? It enters by way of the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind *(mano)* and

the mind *(citta)* goes out to receive that object through, those same six sense doors. Whichever avenue the mind inclines out through it is always in a state of *breaking out*. This characteristic of this ordinary or commonplace mind is therefore like a fire work shooting up with streams of sparks. These latter are the restless, proliferating processes. However, they can't be seen unless the mind is concentrated. One therefore must know both about the entering of objects and about the mind's inclining out to receive them. Why should the mind be like this? Because when it goes to receive them it becomes bound up with the object, for that object is also coming in to tie-up with the mind. This is what we call the fetters *(saṁyojana)*.

If the mind does not go and tie-in, then the object will pass on its way without involvement. This can be compared to water droplets falling onto a lotus leaf. They roll off without sticking or adhering. The hindrances arise in one's mind because the incoming object sticks and attaches. When it becomes bound into the mind then it is known as a fetter. You must therefore look and see these fetters for what they are in your own mind.

The Factors of Enlightenment *(Bojjhaṅga)*

When mindfulness is set, watchful and aware, it will steadily become stronger and swift enough to catch up with the mind. It normally cannot keep up, which is what gives the fetters and hindrances an opportunity to arise. This swift mindfulness is instantly aware of the sight's or the sound's entry through the eyes or ears, of the mind's involvement and tie-in and of the subsequent liking or despising. If mindfulness is prompt enough to know this sequence, then there won't be much of a problem. It will be aware from the first contact with a sight or sound that they have come to provoke and incite the arising of liking or despising. However, the sight or sound is really nothing more than that, whereas the seed of liking and despising is found right here in ourselves, in the mind. This mind brings such a predilection out with it to receive the sight or sound it likes, and takes the despising out to meet one it doesn't. It can be compared to when a safety match and its striking surface meet and a flame is produced. The fires of lust, hatred and delusion flare up. However, even when the match is present if there is no striking surface, it won't ignite. Therefore that which comes in and that which goes out to receive it must accord with each other. The fire (the fetters and the hindrances) will therefore not ignite when mindfulness is up to the mark. This mindfulness is the enlightenment factor of mindfulness *(sati-bojjhaṅga)*.

When the enlightenment factor of mindfulness has been born one can then start to investigate things *(dhammā)* correctly by selecting and sifting. This means a discrimination of what is wholesome and good, and of what is unwholesome and bad; what is detrimental and harmful, and what is harmless; what is evil and gross, and what is rare and refined; the dark side and the light side. This ability to sift through and discriminate concerning these things is called the enlightenment factor of the investigation of phenomena *(dhamma-vicāya-bojjhaṅga)*.[10]

This is about the things inside our mind: the wholesome and unwholesome, the harmful and the harmless, the good and the bad, all within this mind. One's discrimination is not quick enough when one recollects and becomes mindful of an affair only after it has arisen and died away and when the action, whether good or bad, has already been carried through. This indicates a sluggish mindfulness that is not abreast of events and only knows after it is all over whether anything good or bad was said or done. But when mindfulness is abreast of whatever is happening, one is able to discern what is skilful or not, what is good or not and in what way. One will then hold only to the good side and refrain from the bad.

The effort and energy which arise from one's investigation and holding to the good and rejecting the bad is called the enlightenment factor of energy *(viriya-bojjhaṅga)*. The hindrances which then arise can be ejected and the samadhi can be fostered and safeguarded. When an object enters through any of the six sense doors, one just lets it pass on through, without sticking or tying in as a fetter. Whatever is not good can then be gradually abandoned, and the good safeguarded.

When this is the case, rapture will arise —a spiritual *(nirāmisa)* rapture without baited hook, and therefore an inner rapture or the enlightenment factor of rapture *(pīti-bojjhaṅga)*.

With the enlightenment factor of rapture, both body and mind grow calm. This is the enlightenment factor of tranquillity *(passaddhi-bojjhaṅga)*, which is imbued with an inner happiness.

With such inner happiness the mind will become composed and steady. This is the enlightenment factor of samādhi *(samādhi-bojjhaṅga)*.

When one fixes on this samadhi to make it steadfast then this becomes the enlightenment factor of equanimity *(upekkhā-bojjhaṅga)*.

These seven factors of enlightenment arise step by step. But for them to be born at all one must rely on one's practice right from the beginning. If you set your mindfulness on breathing in and out, then make sure it's firmly based and steady. Eventually, it will be alert to the objects that come-in and to the mind's inclination to go out to them. When mindfulness and attention are constant, the object will be unable to tie-in and bind the mind, giving rise to fetters and hindrances. All of this means that at this level of practice the mindfulness and investigative powers must be highly refined. Focus on this. Come to know for yourself the truth of things as they really are.

17th September 2504 B.E.(1961)

Talk 14

Integrating into the Noble Truth of Suffering

Will you all please compose and focus your mind within. See the body, the feeling and the mind *(citta)*. See the mental objects, which means examining the hindrances, the sense bases and the factors of enlightenment. I have already explained all of this, stage by stage, so this time I'll just offer these few headings. There are many and various subjects but they can't yet be correctly brought together into a single way of practice —especially when the mind is still so agitated and restless. Therefore, I will now present an integrated and correct way of practice so that you won't lose your way through uncertainty.

Firstly, centre the mind and set mindfulness on the single point at the nostrils or upper lip (as the *nimitta)* for mindfulness of breathing. Be aware of the breath's contact at this single point, right here and now.

At this moment, is there bodily and mental pleasure, pain or an intermediate feeling? Set the mind to see this and then look in at the mind. Is it agitated or calm? If you are comfortable in body and mind, then it should be calm. Otherwise, it will be unquiet and restive. Focus so as to know the actual situation at this moment. Examine yourself. If there is still restlessness, then that restlessness itself will be a hindrance which blocks the mind from samadhi. See if such hindrances are present.

Examine this nāma-rūpa. This is the assembled (physical-) body *(rūpa-kāya)* sitting here. However, it is not just an inanimate doll, for it is living matter together with mind. It has avenues by which the mind receives objects and various concerns and affairs sometimes via the eyes, or ears, or nose, or tongue, or body and sometimes via the mind *(mano)*. If you were to open your eyes now, you would immediately see something or other, while your ears may hear the noise of a car or the sound of speaking —including this Dhamma talk been given here now. Meanwhile, the nose smells, the tongue tastes, the body has sensations from the cool breeze or from the heat, and the mind thinks of various things.

If the mind is not composed and concentrated, it will go off thinking of this issue and that affair. However, once it is centred, it will think only of one single thing. The sound of this talk contacts your ears: If you determine to listen, then your mind will incline out to know and you hear that sound. This 'hearing' is termed consciousness. Upon listening whatever pleasure, pain or neither-pleasure-nor-pain is present is termed feeling. The mind inclines out to know, and to note and perceive; it can recollect the sounds and words spoken and is therefore able to bring them together and one can then get the idea. If you hear and can't remember one word or the next, then you can't possibly put together any idea. This 'remembering' can also be termed perception. When you have got the idea or percept together, then the thoughts that follow straight on from there are the mental-formations. The mind then inclines out to know about that thinking and keeps with it all the way; this is consciousness again.

The pain, pleasure or indifference that arises when consciousness knows, following thinking, is feeling. The 'remembering' of whatever we are thinking about is perception, while the thought-fabricating on top of that is mental formations. And all of this because the mind inclines out to know. It's this very condition which is known as nāma. Every person at every moment when awake and not sleeping is therefore made up of *rūpa-and-nāma*, continually arising and intricately involved together.

Set yourself, therefore, to see rūpa. Where is one to look? The eyes, the ears, the nose, the tongue, the body —this is where to look. Setting mindfulness there, realize that whatever form the eye sees together with the physical eye is called rūpa. Similarly, whatever sound is heard and the ears themselves, whatever odour is smelled and the nose itself, whatever touch the body contacts and the body itself and whatever flavour is tasted and the tongue itself, are all called rūpa.

We are now taking the affairs of sights and sounds (for example) as an object for the mind to think about. However, if there were mere rūpa without a mind inclining-out to know, then even though there might be eyes they would be as if blind, the ears would be as if deaf, the nose without smelling, the tongue without tasting and the body insensible and numb. The reason why the eyes see, the ears hear, the nose smells, the tongue tastes and the body feels is because the mind inclines-out to know —and this condition is what is termed nāma.

After you have focussed on rūpa, set your attention on nāma. This means seeing into your mind when you experience it constantly inclining-out to receive various affairs via the eyes or ears (for example). The condition of consciousness is then apparent as 'seeing' or 'hearing', and that of feeling as pain or pleasure or indifference. Perception manifests as marking and remembering and mental-formations as thinking and fabricating. Therefore the knowing about nāma is the looking into the mind to see when it inclines-out to acknowledge various things.

Fixing one's attention so as to clearly see nāma-rūpa will bring forth the enlightenment factor of a sure-footed and steadfast mindfulness. An unsteady mindfulness can't catch up with nāma-rūpa and needs further training. However, once it can keep up with them, it will clearly discern the mind, as it inclines out, in terms of various conditions. It will then see that consciousness has arisen, feeling, perception and mental-formations have all arisen. This is the foundation and base of mindfulness *(satipaṭṭhāna)* and with even greater clarity it becomes the enlightenment factor of mindfulness.

From this mindfulness with its clear-seeing of nāma-rūpa an investigation and discrimination of phenomena will be born. In the beginning this will be a sorting out right here within, distinguishing that 'this is rūpa,' 'this is feeling,' 'this is perception,' 'these are mental formations' and 'this is consciousness.' While still uninstructed one considers them all to be assembled together as a unit or entity and indistinguishable. The mature and fully fledged mindfulness, however, will be able to discriminate what is what. This is an enlightenment-factor and thus energy, rapture, tranquillity of mind and body, a composed and firm samadhi and equanimity will be born.

This fixing of the mind on nāma-rūpa, as I have explained, means a focussing on the concentrated and established mind. Look at the mind inclining-out to know various things and distinguish which processes depend on the avenues of the eyes or ears (and which are themselves rūpa). You will there find the truth of nāma-rūpa.

The Noble Truth of Suffering

The truth of nāma-rūpa is, conventionally speaking, one of birth as beginning, ageing as middle and death at the end. Consider the origin of the physical body and the mind joining it as the mental group to form this living body which all of us possess. This period of origination is known as birth *(jāti)*. There is then the process of change and development: the body grows and matures through the various ages and reaches the present one, of old age *(jarā)*. This is a process which will continue right up until the final episode, which is death.

However, such thinking may give rise to some apprehension and alarm. We have all passed through birth, are at present ageing and in the future lies death. So why should we be only afraid of old age and death? It's because we feel that we are mixed up and involved in all this too; that *'I am born,' 'I grow old'* and *'I die.'* To experience oneself as participating in this way is indeed likely to cause apprehension.

Whenever one comes up against bodily pain or mental suffering —one is ill for example, or mentally distressed— then one detests and doesn't want anything to do with it. It is completely unwished for. Generally speaking, everyone hates suffering and when 'growing old' is seen as suffering one therefore hates old age. Similarly, one hates death, sickness and ill health as all being suffering. Everyone has had to experience some such suffering, either much or little. We have all felt bodily pain, we are in the midst of ageing and though we have not yet died we fear death and don't want to die. Therefore, it can't be said that we haven't seen suffering, for everyone of us has come up against it. But because this brings only upset and anxiety, dislike and loathing, it cannot be what is called the Noble Truth of Suffering. The Lord Buddha wished for us to see the Noble Truth of Suffering *(Dukkha Ariya Sacca)* which on experiencing does not bring hatred, old age, sickness or death. The worldly understanding of suffering brings only loathing, ageing, illness and death, which are all unwished for and unwanted. This certainly is not the Noble Truth of the Lord Buddha which on realization means a going beyond ageing, sickness and death.

Now then, how should we go about seeing this? According to the Lord Buddha's way as expounded in the Great Discourse on the Foundations of Mindfulness, one must establish mindfulness to keep up with the arising of nāma-rūpa. Look and see these in your mind until you know their arising and disappearing every moment without break. The inclining-out of the mind (which is nāma) as consciousness, for example, after arising and knowing a certain affair, then disappears. It then arises again with another affair and again disappears. During a single hour the mind inclines-out as consciousness (for example) to receive and know of countless affairs.

Rūpa which is the connection or communicating channel for the outward inclining of the mind is much the same. One moment it's a form for the eyes to see, the next it's a sound for the ears to hear all coming together in a complex unremitting concatenation. Nāma-rūpa is therefore always arising and disappearing. It arises in birth, develops and changes with age and finally passes away in death. The person who is looking —namely oneself— at this arising and disappearing can't say that he also arises and disappears together with them because he is there seeing them in their constant arising and disappearing. This being the case, one can practise separating what is seen from that which sees. Separate inside yourself. Practise this separation until you know those things which must arise and cease. That which sees this knows according to the truth of their arising and ceasing, yet does not itself arise and cease. When this knowledge arises then one has certainly practised realizing the Noble Truth of Suffering of the Lord Buddha. Seeing this Truth, one has happiness and comfort, without suffering along with those things that must arise and disappear. One need not age, nor be ill or die because that which is born, ages and dies is in the nāma-rūpa, which is seen, whereas that which sees is something else.

This much alone will bring a happiness without any feeling of suffering and there will be a letting-go and a release within. The Noble Truth of Suffering of the Lord Buddha is not therefore anything to be detested or feared as is sometimes thought. It is something which when realized —or even only examined as to its condition— brings happiness.

18th September 2504 B.E. (1961)

Talk 15

'Ordinary' Suffering and Mind-made Suffering

I will now present some Dhamma which comes from the section on the Truth of Suffering *(Dukkha-Sacca)*. May all of you focus and centre your minds on your own nāma-rūpa. This fathom-long and span-wide body sitting here now is the rūpa or bodily group *(rūpa-kāya)*. Nāma is the condition of the mind as it inclines-out to know sights and sounds (for example), which is called consciousness; to feel pleasure, pain or intermediate feeling; to perceive; and to think and process, which is mental-formations. With such concocting goes an experiencing or 'knowing' which is back to consciousness again. Set up the seeing into this nāma-rūpa so as to see their properties inside you and especially to discern the mind's outward-inclining to know about various affairs. The sound of my speaking and your ear make contact and the mind inclines-out to know hearing. The mind inclines-out to the noise outside and there is consciousness and then feeling, perception and mental formations. Notice and be quick to catch all of this.

'Ordinary' Suffering

After clearly seeing the nāma-rūpa within you, think back into the past to its conception in the very beginning, which is called birth *(jāti)*. This is termed 'knowing the past'. There is then the continuing process of growth and change. That development and change up until now is called 'the past part' while that which is currently taking place is called 'the present part'. Future change will carry on until finally this nāma-rūpa breaks up and disperses. This continuing change is ageing *(jarā)* while the ultimate breaking up is death *(maraṇa)*. This death ahead is called 'the future'. Reflect upon and see death, the final end, and know the future.

This seeing of the past and future is still only a thought process and not yet (true) knowledge *(ñāṇa)*. Thinking in this way may also give rise to aversion and apprehension about these inevitable events. One must therefore consider birth, death and the present (old-) ageing as 'ordinary'[11] and inevitable. However much aversion and fear of ageing and death one has indicates the extent of one's misapprehension of this truth. But properly seeing this inevitable norm will stop such negative feeling.

An appreciation of the inevitable course of things allows the truths of birth, ageing and death to be integrated into one truth. This truth can be seen in the present by an inward-seeing to the 'beginning', the 'middle' and the 'end' —much as on opening one's eyes one views the whole of a certain thing. One sees that thing in its entirety; one views the whole course of events from the beginning at birth, the middle in ageing to the end in death. The seeing-in-the-present of all of this is knowledge which penetrates to the whole truth of the inevitable course of things.

The seeing here and now of nāma-rūpa in its entirety will stop the arising of any aversion or fear concerning these conditions, because one knows them to be normal and inevitable. They aren't anything strange or extraordinary, nor are they anything to be liked or despised. This is one type of suffering, that of the 'Ordinary'.

Suffering Which the Outward-inclining Mind Contrives

To see another type of suffering, focus on your mind inclining-out, becoming nāma, as I've already explained. Reflect and think back to the time just before its inclining-out to know a sight or sound (for example). Seeing that form or hearing that sound is consciousness, followed by feeling   pleasant, painful or intermediate.

Sorrow *(Soka)*

Suffering manifests on some occasions as sorrow *(soka)*. For example, separating from a loved one, either by going far away or through death, or hearing of such a separation will, with consciousness, lead to painful feeling and appears as sorrow *(soka)*.

Lamentation (Parideva)

Sometimes one's thought-processes proliferate under the power of that sorrow and fill the mind with lamentation. If it is strong then it

will appear as crying and bewailing one thing or another. This is called lamentation *(parideva)*.

Pain *(dukkha)*: Mental Suffering *(Domanassa)*

Some suffering does not directly concern the mind, for instance, when the body is ill and in pain. This is called bodily pain. However, such bodily pain can also force suffering onto the mind. On being ill, one may worry about its severity and one's chances of recovery. There are also many other ways for the mind to be afflicted, including mental distress and regret, and these can all be summarized as mental suffering.

Despair *(Upāyāsa)*

On some occasions one may encounter difficult and needy circumstances; feeling stifled and oppressed which will preclude any happiness. Wherever one feels such oppression one will struggle to escape. Thus we have the saying, *'A confined body is bearable, but not a stifled mind.'*

All these forms of suffering —sorrow, lamentation, bodily-pain, mental suffering and despair— are each a condition of painful feeling *(dukkha vedanā)* and arise when the mind inclines-out to see a form, or hear a sound (for example). That form and sound are the seed for the subsequent arising of feeling and various forms of suffering. Perception is then a perceiving or remembering of suffering, and mental formations are the processing and fabricating of suffering.

Thinking back, one should be able to see that all this suffering originated from the mind's inclining-out as nāma. Sorrow, for example, is also a type of nāma for it is painful feeling. By considering one's past experience one knows that suffering arose dependant on nāma-rūpa. Now examine the present situation —how is the mind? Is it inclining-out to see forms and to hear sounds or to consider about all those issues stored away? Is there any suffering present? Any sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress or despair?

If you do find suffering, then see and understand that it all arose from some issue or other —and that such issues can only come in through the eyes or ears (etc.) as I have already explained, and not from anywhere else. The mind's inclining-out to know which is nāma, or consciousness, feeling, perception and mental-formations, then puts together suffering, sorrow, and lamentation (etc.). Should the mind not incline-out to receive and process the sights and sounds, then suffering cannot arise. You must set yourself to see and understand how such suffering —this second type of suffering— can arise in your mind.

This presentation about suffering is in two parts. Firstly, there is the 'ordinary and inevitable' type of suffering and then there is the suffering arising dependant on the mind's inclining-out to receive and process. In coming to understand these two parts you must initially focus on and understand the nāma-rūpa within yourself, Seeing its natural and inevitable course, with its beginning, middle and end all seen together at one point. Look at nāma as the mind inclines-out to receive and process various issues.

Will you all now please apply yourselves to listen[12] and investigate so as to know about this suffering which the mind receives and processes, as I have been explaining.

24th September 2504 B.E. (1961)

Talk 16

Suffering because of Association and Separation

Firstly, will you all please centre your mind within yourself. Focus into nāma-rūpa: rūpa being this living body with its various functioning senses, while nāma is the condition of the mind —which also depends on rūpa— as it inclines out to know sights and sounds (etc.).

See the birth of this nāma-rūpa, its end or death and in between its constant changing which is ageing. See this whole sequence in the present moment and the inevitable condition *(dhammatā)* of nāma-rūpa will manifest. This is the Truth of Suffering, the true state of 'ordinary suffering' and is not something to be afraid of. Any fear and aversion or, going to the opposite extreme, any enjoyment can only arise because one has not yet realized its true nature.

After seeing and understanding the 'ordinary suffering' we turn to focus on the mind's inclining-out to receive and process suffering. We can then see that this very mind is what contrives the arising of mental suffering from bodily pain, and mental distress from various external affairs. If the mind did not receive and process, then suffering could not arise in its various manifestations, as I have explained previously.

These various properties of mind-contrived suffering can be reduced to two: association with all things and people which are disliked and unwelcome and, secondly, separation from all those things and people which are loved.

This association and separation are also 'normal and inevitable' and become suffering because of the mind. The storing away of appreciative wishes and fondness in the mind can be classified as hankering, while any holding to disfavour and displeasure is dejection. In short, one can say that this 'disliking-and-liking' is usually submerged deeply in the mind. It is not until one encounters something or someone that they will display themselves. When this happens and dislike emerges —as when one sees a form, hears a sound or even just thinks of some such disagreeable sight or sound —then it is termed coming into association with unwelcome things. One sees or hears something about some disagreeable person and such association leads to the arising of suffering.

Contrariwise, being separated from something or someone liked also leads to suffering. This suffering is sometimes characterized by sorrow or lamentation, by bodily pain which also distresses the mind, by grief or by despair. Therefore, these can all be reduced to just two causes: Association with any person or thing which one dislikes and separation from that which one likes.

In truth though, this disliking-or-liking does not originate from anyone or anything but from our own mind which has stored it away. It is therefore this mind with its likes and dislikes that contrives the various forms of suffering. As this suffering is painful feeling it is part of nāma and there is also therefore perception of suffering *(dukkha-saññā)*, and mental-formations of suffering *(dukkha-sankhāra)*. Just as someone lights a fire and constantly adds fuel to prevent its going out, so our own mind starts up suffering and contrives to maintain it there in the mind. On coming to see the outward-inclining mind as it processes suffering —at the same time seeing the roots of liking and aversion buried there— one realizes, from close in, these two causes. One's discernment into the suffering of the mind has thus come to quite a profound level.

One may look at the external or the internal. Here the external means being aware of the association and separation in one's nāma-rūpa. Think back as far as your memory goes and examine your experience in terms of this. Throughout your life, from the child's body growing into an adult's and then on into this present stage, you can see the continuing association and separation from the physical body. The childhood period is in association with one's being a child. With growth and maturity, one becomes separated from childhood by association with being adult. As life's stages pass, so one separates from the preceding stage and associates with the next on up to the present. This association may be agreeable at some stages along the way and disagreeable at others. But it cannot always be the way we want it to be. Disagreeable stages will have to be associated with and agreeable stages separated from and left behind.

Consciousness is much the same. The mind inclines-out to receive an object and initially consciousness arises. If it inclines-out to see a form then it is eye-consciousness *(cakkhu-viññāṇa)*; to hear a sound is ear-consciousness *(sota-viññāṇa)*. However, for the mind to see or hear, it must always depend on the visual and auditory organs, even though those eyes and ears are variable and mutable. The eyes will dim and become blurry; the ears will eventually be hard of hearing. Then the mind's inclining-out won't be able to see or hear as distinctly or effectively as before. The other sense-doors are similar. The body when aged and decrepit is no longer as serviceable or adaptable as before. So again one must be separated from that agreeable consciousness with its distinct hearing and clear vision and associate with less effective sight and hearing.

Feeling is also the same. Even though the inclining-out mind finds the pleasant feeling agreeable, it cannot have it that way all the time. Painful feeling is found disagreeable but it is not always present. Intermediate feelings may appear either agreeable or dull and disagreeable, yet even so we cannot have them always like that. Thus, we must continually associate with feelings which we do not like and be separated from those we do.

Perception follows after feeling in the same way. Sometimes one's memory and perception are bright and clear, and at other times they are not so good. And that is not all, for whenever we recollect things we like, then things we do not care for are remembered too. If we see or hear something disagreeable but then cannot remember it, there's nothing to be taken up and thought and concocted about. However, when we can remember it will quickly be taken up and processed in thought. It's just not possible not to want to remember: Sometimes those things we dislike intensely will be remembered more clearly than the things we like. Therefore, we must associate with percepts that we find disagreeable and be separated from those we like.

The thinking processes of mental-formations are also the same. The various forms of suffering must all come through the stage of thought processing. Otherwise, they won't arise. Sometimes a touch of sadness is processed and, perhaps because of concern or apprehension, becomes blown up into major distress. These mental-formations are therefore of vital importance and form a basis for the uprising of suffering. If you do not like suffering why do you concoct and think it up? Whom does this thinking? Your own mind! No one else can come and think it up for you. Even though you do not wish for suffering, you always —without ceasing— go on and process those thoughts that lead to suffering. You may not like suffering yet you indulge in such thinking! How can you ever escape suffering when it is like this.

These mental formations are also always coming into association and separating away. On occasion one must associate with disagreeable proliferating thoughts and at other times one is separated from agreeable thought processes. But it is always oneself who originates these thought concoctions leading to association, separation and suffering. One will not stop the processing and therefore one must continue to encounter mental-formations which breed suffering. One must suffer and cannot find a way out.

Examine and see these conditions of 'associating with' and 'separating away' in your own nāma-rūpa. Make sure you discern that the root cause of it all lies submerged as likes-and-dislikes in one's mind. Penetrate to see and comprehend this liking-and-disliking which leads and draws the mind away into the path of suffering. It turns consciousness into suffering-consciousness *(dukkha-viññāṇa)*, feeling into suffering-feeling, perception into suffering-perception and mental formations into suffering-mental formations. When we penetrate to the truth of this, the liking-and-disliking will subside and be stilled. That mind proceeding down the path of suffering will now come to peace, and consciousness will cease to be suffering-consciousness, feeling will cease to be suffering-feeling, perception will cease to be suffering-perception and mental formations will cease to be suffering-mental formations. This means to say that the mind has stopped concocting suffering for itself and so suffering will subside.

This, then, is the strategy to halt the processing of suffering for oneself. You must practise to comprehend suffering and its way of operating within this nāma-rūpa. This is the only way to remedy the suffering of your mind.

Will you pay close attention while listening to what will be chanted now, and reflect upon that Truth of Suffering contained in these lines of the Lord Buddha Teaching, taken from the Great Discourse on the Foundations of Mindfulness:

Appiyasampayoga — association with the disliked.
Piyavippayoga — separation from the liked.

25th September 2504 B.E. (1961)

Talk 17

Suffering Through Non-fulfilment of One's Hopes and Desires

I will now present Dhamma on the Noble Truth of Suffering (*Dukkha Sacca*) in the section; 'the non-fulfilment of one's wishes is suffering.'

First of all, gather your mind together within yourself for this is where the Lord Buddha directed his teaching. Other people, following him, have similarly explained his teaching as pointing within. In listening to Dhamma you must therefore turn to see inside yourself. You will need to search out the five aggregates or the nāma-rūpa. When one encounters them one must also come to the true state of being which is the Truth of Suffering (*Dukkha Sacca*). This is because this Truth manifests in the five aggregates or nāma-rūpa, which form a basis for it. Anyone aspiring to comprehend suffering must therefore focus investigation on the plane of wisdom and insight. The wisdom and insight of the Lord Buddha's Teaching manifest in nāma-rūpa. Without that nāma-rūpa, wisdom and insight cannot arise. It is similar to a person wanting to stand: If there is no ground, then there is nowhere to stand. Therefore, will each one of you now incline your mind inward to examine your own nāma-rūpa.

Inspect your fathom-long, span-wide body. Examine nāma as the mind is inclining-out to know: What is it knowing about? At the present time you are listening to this talk so the mind should incline-out to hear, as consciousness of sound. The pleasure, pain or indifference arising from this hearing is feeling; the marking and remembering about this hearing is perception; and the processing mind following the issue is mental-formations. This condition of the mind inclining-out is nāma and when it inclines-out to know outside sounds then it is nāma-in-external-sounds.

Each person therefore, exists only together with nāma-rūpa. If this is transcended, then 'person' does not appear. It is here in this nāma-rūpa that this *'I, me-and-mine'* appears and is grasped hold of. This

grasping is a concocting process of the mind and as such is a form of mental-formations which is another condition of the mind's inclining-out. You should therefore examine this feeling of *'me-and-mine'*: How deep and profoundly does it lie? You will then find that it only goes as far as the nāma-rūpa. If mental-formations, perception, feeling and seeing or hearing (etc.) are all lacking, then one has no experience of feeling or thinking at all. The physical body alone is merely like a hunk of wood totally without sensation or thought, and all sense of 'self-and-other' has completely gone. It's similar to being asleep, when feelings of 'self-and-other' and various cavorting thoughts are entirely lost. Whatever a person's status, he or she must fall under these conditions.

This sense of 'self-and-other' in its varying forms therefore appears only in the nāma-rūpa. When such 'self-and-other', 'mine-and-thine' are present then direct your vision towards the condition of desiring or wanting something. Therefore, with complete penetration into nāma-rūpa you must also detect this desire existing in the mind.

There are two forms of desire, one being that which is realizable, and the other that which is beyond reach. The desires and wishes that can be fulfilled are concerned with those objectives which are possible to attain. But this does not mean that they can all be attained just by wishing, for the appropriate causes must first be put into effect. For example, in making a 'realizable wish' to attain virtue and good, one must practise in the appropriate skilful ways to produce the right causes.

Do not criticise or find fault with desire per se, because the wish to attain virtue and the practise to achieve that is quite correct and right. This 'desire for good' the Lord Buddha called 'resolve' or 'determination' (*adhiṭṭhāna*). The Bodhisatta resolved to attain Buddhahood by steadily following that Way. The Followers (*Sāvaka*) had also previously resolved to steadily attain to their state. If a person is working towards the completion and realization of his desire and that aspiration is made up with 'true determination' then it can be called 'true resolve' (*sacca-adhiṭṭhāna*). The Lord Buddha counted this 'true-resolve' as one of the Perfections (*Paramī*).

The type of desire which is unattainable goes against the principles of nature. Birth, ageing, illness and death are normal and inevitable. Sorrow, heartache, bodily pain, mental-distress and depression must all inevitably exist according to the state of things. To wish them away, forbidding their appearance, goes against the ways of nature. This desire can never be realized and so it too must add to the mind's suffering as the 'nonfulfillment of one's wishes.'

Now, come and consider this body and the mental group: this nāma-rūpa which I have already explained. It originated in birth; is developing and changing into old age; is painful and troublesome through sickness; and, finally, it must break up with death. This is the inevitable nature of nāma-rūpa. Examine now your mind. If it still includes grasping and holding, if it still contains desires, then there must also be sorrow and distress. It cannot escape them. The only way is to release and let go.

When one lets go of something then one escapes all the sorrow involved with that thing. If one lets go of everything then one is freed from all anguish. But if you cannot yet relinquish, then your grasping must inevitably bring suffering when your desires remain unfulfilled. Therefore focus to see these unattainable desires in your mind and then examine the suffering that arises when those wishes fail. See it as it really is.

Penetrating to this truth brings forth an up-to-the-mark wisdom which is able to separate and remove the suffering from one's mind. The nāma-rūpa will then follow its natural course while the observer watches. This observation is mindfulness and a combined mindfulness-and-wisdom (*sati-paññā*), which does not engage in concocting desires and suffering. Nāma-rūpa will then be seen following its natural course. It's as if there is a burning house: While one remains inside there will be agitation and panic, but on leaving one can then look back. One can now look-on that burning house without feeling any heat in oneself. One observes with knowledge. The happiness that springs forth from calmness and tranquillity will then appear.

Each person must confront both his own suffering and that of the various people he is concerned and involved with. If one collects all that suffering and loads it away in the mind, grasping and holding on to it, then this can only increase one's agitation and unhappiness. How-

ever, if one can steadily dislodge and throw out such suffering without adding any more, then the mind will be able to emerge unscathed.

It may not be possible for anyone always to evade the suffering stemming from external sources but the inner suffering can be avoided. We usually bring the external suffering into our minds as mental distress. It is therefore as if the suffering has two layers or levels: both the external and the inner. Those who practise following the Lord Buddha's Teaching know how to lighten and relieve the situation by leaving the external suffering alone outside without burdening the mind with it. Even if one then finds oneself in the midst of (external) suffering, one's mind remains content. Such happiness of mind allows mindfulness-and-wisdom to remedy whatever external suffering may possibly be cured. But if the mind fully accepts and burdens itself with the external suffering, then there is no way it can remedy the situation.

In order to separate these types of suffering you must depend and rely on the Way of practice as laid down by the Lord Buddha. Firstly, set yourself to see nāma-rūpa and know the state of its suffering. Recognize the mental suffering which arises from the non-fulfilment of unattainable desires. Penetrate to this so that, as the desire subsides, the mind grows calm and tranquil. When you have realized this then you will have received full benefit from your study into the Truth of Suffering of the Lord Buddha and will finally find happiness.

2nd October 2504 B.E. (1961)

Talk 18

Summarizing the Aggregate of Suffering

Will you all please collect your mind together and focus within yourself. Listen to this teaching and bring and examine it within so as to see Dhamma there. You won't realize Dhamma from just the outside sounds, for that would be just memorizing or an intellectual understanding, whereas understanding the truth in oneself is seeing Dhamma with wisdom. Therefore, now centre on yourself. Focus to see from the gross and blatant to the subtle and refined:

Be aware of your breathing. Everyone of us must breathe in and out.

Be aware of your present sitting posture. How are your hands and feet placed? How is your overall posture?

Examine the whole of your body: up from the soles of the feet, down from the hair on your head, all encased by skin.

Analyse it into the elements of earth, water, fire, wind and space. Reflect on extracting each element from the body until only the space element remains. Then consider how before conception this body was just the space element, and how finally it returns to emptiness.

Now, recombine those elements together into your complete body which has feelings of pleasure, pain and neither-pleasure-nor-pain; and which is the resort of the mind.

Those feelings stimulate the mind. For example, if there is a pleasant feeling then 'liking' is fabricated; if it is a painful feeling then 'disliking' is made up; and with a neutral feeling the mind is caught deep in 'attachment', which is a condition of delusion.

Go further in to another level, to that condition of mind which 'likes', 'dislikes' and 'attaches' to the myriad things. Be aware of the present state of your mind: Now.

By penetrating this far you will be able to distinguish the composition of the mind. The mind is one part, while 'liking', 'detesting' and 'delusion' make up another. They are combined and entwined together and it is these admixtures to the mind that are the hindrances which

block any progress in wholesomeness and higher virtue.

Even though you may have steadily centred your mind following these instructions, those admixtures in the mind will always be waiting to draw the mind out again. You must therefore be ready for this by placing mindfulness where the distracting agents enter, i.e. by way of the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and the mind (*mano*). It is the mind which holds and retains so many issues and concerns, and so it needs extra-special watching. However, do not go in and forcibly suppress it, for that only gives rise to fatigue, over-strain and irritability. Therefore, allow the mind to follow its wishes, but carefully note how it goes out. What is it that comes and ties-in to haul the mind out again? Being quick enough to catch all of this gives one the whole picture: All these issues and affairs enter by way of the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body or else through the mind itself. The mind's restless, fretful thinking proliferates on every side and so it cannot be centred in one-pointedness.

Do not use any force. Simply watch and note —but make sure you know in time and can keep up with events. The mind will then become pacified by itself and calm down. This is because the mind is the 'element-of-knowing,' with intelligence an intrinsic part. When the opportunity for self-knowing arrives, then such knowledge will be born without any programming being necessary, for the essence is already there.

This arising of self-knowledge is accompanied by an even firmer mindfulness, with the mind itself now fully capable of investigating and distinguishing its own condition. It will know the components of the mind and the entry of all the admixtures. This steady centring of the mind until it is able to investigate the phenomena within oneself displays the mind's ability to distinguish, the truth inside, and it is this which is the Factor of Enlightenment.

Now, consider the source teaching of the Lord Buddha which is the 'Truth of Suffering'. One firstly 'reads' with the intellect, memorizing following the Lord Buddha's Teaching. He presented for our attention the Truth of Suffering:

"Birth is suffering. Old age and death are suffering. Suffering has this nature and follows these conditions." He then continued,

"Sorrow is suffering, lamentation, bodily illness and its acceptance into the mind are suffering, mental distress and despair are suffering."

"Association with all unwelcome, unloved things is suffering; separation from all beloved things is suffering;" and, "Nonfulfillment of one's desires is suffering."

After giving one's intellectual attention to these Teachings of the Lord Buddha, now reflect, 'Hasn't everyone of us already encountered this suffering?'. *"Birth is suffering, old age is suffering"*: One might not know that birth is suffering and if one isn't yet old then old age will still be unknown. But as it steadily approaches and the body becomes more and more decrepit, then one may understand. *"Death is suffering"*: however, as you haven't yet died you can't know it. Even so, you are still afraid and do not wish to die. As far as '*sorrow and lamentation etc.,*' are concerned, you will all have encountered them to some extent and can therefore variously appreciate their anguish. *Bodily and mental dis-ease* can also be recognized as suffering. As you have not encountered the truth of every type of suffering —especially that of birth, old age and death— you will need to reflect and investigate first so as to understand exactly why they are suffering.

This state of suffering follows the natural conditions and the course of the five aggregates are: corporeality aggregate (*rūpa-khandha*) which is this bodily-group (*rūpa-kāya*); feeling aggregate, which is pleasure, pain and, an intermediate, neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling; perception aggregate, which variously recollects and perceives; mental-formations aggregate being the thought processing; consciousness aggregate which is the knowing of seeing a form or hearing a sound (etc.). Rūpa is rūpa, but feeling, perception, mental-formations and consciousness are called '*nāma*' which is the condition of the mind inclining-out to know. This 'knowing' of the seeing a form or hearing a sound is firstly consciousness, (then) the experience of pleasure, pain or neither-pleasure-nor-pain is feeling, the recollecting is perception and the processing thoughts are mental-formations. In short, we can call all of this *rūpa-nāma* or nāma-rūpa.

The origination of this nāma-rūpa is birth, its continuing growth

and mutability is old age and its final end is when it breaks up in death. One can therefore reduce this birth-old age-death to arising and extinguishing: At first there is arising and finally there is disappearing. This is the natural course of things.

Since the natural course of things is like this, the Lord Buddha described it as suffering. This can also be understood to mean that nothing can permanently exist: that everything from its arising until its extinguishing must transform and change. This period of transformation between birth and the end is 'ageing'. This, then, is the real truth of suffering, the true state of things which everyone of us alive now with nāma-rūpa must encounter. The ordinary worldling (*puthujjana*) grasps and holds to the nāma-rūpa as *'me-and-mine'* and *'self'* and so takes over the inevitable suffering of nāma-rūpa into his own mind. This is how sorrow and bewailing rise as suffering in one's mind.

The Lord Buddha therefore summarized all suffering into terms of the five aggregates, or one can say the nāma-rūpa. However, if one can release the grasping and holding of nāma-rūpa, then one no longer suffers along with birth, old age, death, nor is one involved in nāma-rūpa with its inevitable pain. Nāma-rūpa then just continues on alone, according to its nature. This is the experience of all the Noble Ones (*Ariya*).

However, the ordinary worldling grasps the nāma-rūpa to himself and thereby contrives his own suffering and sorrow. We ourselves are the ones who process our suffering because our minds are combined with grasping. We contrive our own sorrow, our own lamentation and bemoaning and admit into our mind the course of bodily pain. The mind itself is what processes mental distress and despair.

It is this very processing and contriving that we call the 'mental-formations' which arise through the assembling of consciousness, feeling and perception. One can therefore see that the mind's inclining-out as nāma is the instigator of suffering and the sole source of mental suffering for the mind. As nāma must combine with rūpa, the nature of suffering is found right here in the nāma-rūpa. This means it must be impermanent —arising and finally ceasing. It is both the nature of mental suffering and the processor of suffering for the mind. This is why the Lord Buddha summarized all suffering as nāma-rūpa, or the five aggregates.

However, to actually process suffering this nāma-rūpa must also be combined with a grasping as 'me-and-mine'. Set yourself to see the Truth of Suffering following the Lord Buddha's Teaching by sorting out each chapter and verse and then gather them all together again in this nāma-rūpa or five aggregates. Bring them together in this body and in the mind's inclining-out to receive and process suffering.

By seeing and understanding the truth of this, you will gain knowledge of the Truth of Suffering of the Lord Buddha. Your previous intellectual understanding will then steadily develop into wisdom and you will realize that this Truth is not anything to fear and hate but something which needs to be comprehended and which will then bring one happiness and tranquillity. One's understanding will then be equal to the source of suffering so that one will no longer be deceived into admitting suffering into oneself. By not processing Suffering will then no longer be contrived and so will subside. This will bring happiness and peace.

9th October 2504 B.E. (1961)

Talk 19

The Section on the Origin of Suffering *(Samudaya)*

I will now present a Dhamma teaching concerning the 'Section on the Origination of Suffering' *(Samudaya)* explaining the cause of suffering. Will you all incline your minds inwards and focus in the present. What is the state there? In what direction is it thinking? Fix your mindfulness so that it can keep up and catch what the mind is taking issue with.

The mind goes out thinking towards forms by way of the eyes, towards sounds through the ears, towards odours through the nose, towards tastes through the tongue, and towards tangible objects through the body. It also thinks about previous involvements with sights and sounds (etc.). However, the mind doesn't just incline-out to know, but also grasps and holds on to those objects.

This condition of inclining or voyaging-out to seize hold of sights and sounds is craving *(taṇhā)* and grasping *(upādāna)*. Craving can also be understood, in a general way, as the struggling and excitation of desires in the mind. But a more subtle investigation reveals the outward-voyaging of the mind to grasp and seize-hold.

Craving and grasping are therefore coupled together. When a sight or sound impinges on the visual and auditory organs, and flows on towards the mind, the mind inclines-out to receive it. However, if grasping is not involved, there is just plain nāma and no craving. But if it should then incline-out and grasp hold of another object then this *is* craving. One can distinguish the excitation and reaching-out of the mind as 'craving', while the actual seizing-hold and clinging-to an object is 'grasping'. When only the single term 'craving' is used though, one should understand this as also covering grasping.

This grasping-hold of an object, clamping it into the mind without releasing it to pass through, can include a wish for that object. If the object is agreeable and pleasing, then one will want possession and mastery of it. But if it is disagreeable, one will then want to get rid of it. However, as one is still grasping hold of it —even though one does not like it— one can't release and be free of it. The Lord Buddha therefore divided these properties into three: sensual craving *(kāma-taṇhā)*, craving for existence *(bhava-taṇhā)* and the craving for non-existence *(vibhava-taṇhā)*.

Sensual craving is love and desire for an object. A craving for existence somewhere or other, can be reduced to a wanting mastery or possession over that object of sensual desire. The craving for nonexistence is the desire to be rid of this or that state, really meaning whatever state one does not like.

These three types of craving also include grasping which holds the object in the mind without letting go. Likeable and dislikeable objects are both seized hold of and so 'liking' and 'disliking' regularly arise in the mind. Both liking and disliking cause restlessness and agitation. Why is this? It is just because you still seize hold of the likeable and dislikeable.

It isn't that the mind only inclines-out towards a single object, for in fact they are many. Whatever object appears by way of the eye or ear (etc.), the mind runs-out to seize hold of it. It's always like this, with craving continually in action in the mind without ever calming down. The Lord Buddha therefore taught that it is always craving towards a new condition. We may now crave for a certain visual form (etc.) but on seeing a new object, the desire for that will make us discard the old object. This rejection and new grasping continues on and on without ceasing. The new object is also seized as 'a possession over which one has mastery' and this is constantly repeated, moving on from object to object. This discarding of the old object can also be subsumed under 'craving for nonexistence' which is that struggling to get rid of the present condition. When an object has run its course and gone then the mind struggles again to take in a new one.

If one could remain with a single object then craving would stop in the old without moving forward to a new object. But this craving has no end. It continually creeps forward having to discard its old object in the grasping of the new. When this is the case, even though craving's characteristics are divided into three, they all go together as one. Craving never ceases its inching forward through the myriad objects. It there-

fore has the property of always reaching-out for the new and novel. Continually. On-and-on, engrossed and attached to the objects and always preoccupied with wanting more and more. It is never satiated.

Examine your mind and watch out for craving as it projects-out to receive objects. You may be able to catch this condition of mind, but in the beginning you won't be quick enough. Even so, it's still good to try to follow behind until the mind is swift and agile enough to catch up with itself.

To catch the mind as it reaches-out to grasp, set your mindfulness on the six sense-channel pairs (the internal and external *āyatana)*: The eye and the form it sees are one pair; the ear *(sota)* and the sound it hears are a pair; the nose and the odour it smells are one pair; the tongue and its taste are a pair; the body and its tangible object are a pair; and the mind and the issue it thinks upon are a pair. This doesn't mean that you must focus on them all simultaneously, but be ready to fix upon any object as it makes contact. If it should be a visual form then set your mindfulness on the eye and on that form; if it is a sound then focus on the sound and the ear (and so on).

Now then, let's try this: allow your mind to go out, being very watchful and aware as it gradually exits. You will then find consciousness as the knowing of seeing a form or the knowing of hearing a sound. This 'seeing' and 'hearing' is consciousness and you will find a similar situation when you focus on any of the other sense base pairs.

Focus on contact. What is it you see or hear? You see a sight; you hear a sound. And for that form to be successfully seen the form and 'seeing' must come together as contact. A sound and hearing —and the other sense bases likewise— must contact before a sound or smell (etc.) are successfully experienced.

Next focus on feeling. If the object that comes into contact is agreeable, then pleasant feeling arises; if it is disagreeable then painful feeling arises; and if it is a neutral or indifferent object, then neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling arises.

Focus on perception which recollects and perceives following the feeling.

Focus on volition *(sañcetanā)* or the intentionality of the mind which follows on from perception. When there is perception arising from pleasure, then one's mind sets itself towards that pleasure. Similarly it intends towards pain when perception is based in suffering, and towards neither-pain-nor-pleasure when the perception is like that.

At this point you should have come upon craving as the mind inclines and reaches-out to grasp an object. Whatever way the mind chooses and intends, so it runs out and grasps in that direction. If it sets off towards a perception following on from pleasant feeling, then sensual craving will arise. If it is towards existence, then craving for existence will arise, and if it's towards a perceived painful feeling, there will be craving for nonexistence, which is the wanting to rid oneself of that painful state. When the mind intends towards a perceived intermediate feeling, then any one of these types of craving may arise. This is the seeing of the mind's inclining-out with craving to grasp an object.

Focus on applied-and-sustained thought *(vitakka-vicāra)*, which is reflection or discursive thought, and you will see that these have fallen under the power of craving.

By following this sequence you will appreciate that it all starts with the eye and form or ear and sound (etc.) when the mind gradually, step by step, inclines-out to seize and hold. This, then, is craving, and applied-and-sustained thought must follow under its power.

One can now say that this state of craving directly depends on nāma-rūpa. The eyes and form, ears and sound (etc.) are corporeality while the mind residing with it and inclining-out to receive objects is mentality. But this is not a normal, plain nāma, for instead of letting go the object is seized hold of. Whether the object is liked or disliked it is still grasped hold of, and this is what forms craving. This craving arises dependant on rūpa and nāma and nowhere else. It can be reckoned a nāma-dhamma because it is a concocting agent like the mental-formations.

Why does the mind concoct and contrive in this way? Because there are still underlying defilements known as cankers *(āsava)* in the inclining-out mind. This is the latent proclivity *(anusaya)* of craving lying resident in the mind. Normally it does not show its face and remains as if not there, but should a provoking or alluring object make

contact then that latent tendency bursts out to take the object which fits in with it. Set yourself to see this.

When you can focus on this without a lapse, then the latent tendencies won't have any chance to break out, and the alluring object won't be able to provoke or 'seed'. The latent defilements will then be weakened as the 'seed' has not invigorated. With such mindfulness set, vigilant and alert, it will be able steadily to uproot and destroy that part of the mind which is latent-defilement.

This craving, therefore, is the origin of the mind's suffering. The mind inclines-out to seize and cling to an object, and when inevitably, in accord with its nature, that object changes and transforms, so suffering arises in the mind. However, with constant vigilance the mind will not be able to seize hold of objects. One can then let go of them and thereby release one's suffering as well.

This craving and the suffering it causes both depend and reside in the nāma-rūpa and your attention must therefore be focussed there and in the mind. Mindfulness will then steadily quicken and become swift and alert.

10th October 2504 B.E. (1961)

Talk 20

The Section on the Extinction of Suffering

I will now speak about the cessation of suffering *(dukkha-nirodha)*. The Buddhist Teaching is able to be a refuge *(saraṇa)* for the world because it can explain the extinction of suffering. This is crucial because it is what we are aiming for. If it could not teach this then it would be without essence and basically trivial. However, a method of practice to bring about that extinction is also needed, though actually following that way remains the task and responsibility of each individual person.

Even though the Teaching is genuine and true, if the person does not follow the way of practice then he won't be able to achieve the extinction of suffering. Therefore, the task is up to the individual to follow the practice to effect the required results. This practice is directly concerned with the mind. Today, however, I will first explain the result and fruit of that practice: the extinction of suffering. This is the major and essential fruit of the practice enabling one to see the truth of the Teaching of the Lord Buddha.

Will you now please centre your mind and watch its inclining-out towards knowing various affairs. At this present moment it is inclining-out to receive the sound of this Dhamma Teaching. If you are guarding the mind, you should be able to notice its condition. Is it calm and cool? A feeling of calmness and tranquillity indicates that the Dhamma being offered externally and the inner Dhamma of your centred mind are *'niyyānika'* —capable of leading the mind out away from suffering. And this present calmness of mind is already a cessation of suffering. It might only be a momentary suppression while the mind is centred in Dhamma yet, even so, realize that when it resides constantly with Dhamma there will be a constant cessation as well.

Now will you focus on that 'inclining-out to know' about external affairs the affairs of forms being seen, sounds being heard (etc.) and those former sights and sounds (etc.) already known and stored away as issues by the mind *(mano)*. These affairs are either welcomed with

'hankering,' unwelcomed with 'dejection,' or deceptive and delusory. The mind immediately knows agitation and heat, and cannot be calmed down because of that hankering, dejection, and deluded attachment. This heated excitation of the mind is a subtle form of suffering, though you may not be aware of that. Only after experiencing a calm mind with Dhamma will you appreciate such agitation as one form of suffering. Most people will usually only know, however much or little, about the blatant forms of suffering —sorrow, lamentation, pain, mental distress and despair— which all grow out of this subtle type of suffering.

Reflecting more carefully on why this should be the case, one finds that it is because the *I* becomes involved in the myriad affairs. What are these affairs?

Focus on this body: It is composed of the various elements; it is a fathom long and a span wide, and is sitting here now. We have a 'sense' that *this body is me* and however *it* exists we accept that as how *we* exist. Looking at our face in the mirror, we feel that these are *'my* features.' Looking at our photograph, we think of it as showing *'me'*. Not only is there this 'feeling of self' we also wish for this *'myself-in-this-body'* to proceed in an agreeable way. Compliments about this body are welcome, but any criticism is certainly not. Even though we know for sure that some particular part is not so good, we are still glad of any flattery that says the opposite —and even though we know it is flattery we still like it. This, then, is another aspect as to how desire becomes mixed in.

Focus back on the mind inclining-out. In truth this experiencing-engaged-with-desire (which I've been talking about) is a condition of that mind going-out to know. It first sees the rūpa form —perhaps seeing one's body in a mirror— and this seeing is consciousness. If one likes it then that is pleasure, or even if one doesn't or is indifferent, it is still all feeling. There is perception, and then mental-formations fashion thoughts about one's body and so that 'sense' and those thoughts of *my* body (as I explained above) are all contained in nāma, as the mind inclines-out to know. This nāma is mixed and blended with craving together with grasping and clinging. When it is like this, then all one's experience and thoughts are mixed and permeated with the defilements.

Even though one may feel contentment with one's body, it remains, in truth, rūpa while that 'feeling' is still nāma. After more careful investigation one finds that any feeling of contentment one has in the body cannot compare to that of the calm mind with Dhamma. Once one has experienced the calm arising from Dhamma, this will become self-evident.

Now there is still another important point to consider: We must continually deceive ourselves about the nature of this rūpa-and-nāma. Their true nature is really bound up with impermanence *(aniccatā)*, suffering *(dukkhatā)* —because they can't remain stable— and not-self *(anattatā)*. All rūpa and nāma must proceed from a beginning in birth to an end, with continued change in between. This rūpa which everyone is so attached to must also have this transformation and change. Thus, we must think up ways to fool ourselves into feeling contentment and satisfaction with this ever changing rūpa. For instance, though it is ageing, we manage to see it as not old. If someone then declares to us that it *is* old we are displeased; while if they say the opposite, we are glad—even though it's obvious to all that it truly is old! We like it when they deceive us even as we constantly make sure to fool ourselves too. Putting it off, thinking 'not just yet, not just yet, no need to worry about that until later.' When this rūpa changes, heading towards its extinction, we must think to hold it back and so a struggle and agitation ensues. Happiness is impossible if our thinking goes against the course of nature and refuses to accept its law.

This all results from craving that gives rise to grasping and clinging. We first seize hold of something as '*myself*' and then go on to grasp hold of something else. We grasp and that thing's arising becomes *our* arising, its changing becomes *our* changing and its final extinguishing becomes *our* decline and end. We must therefore constantly spin with the nāma-rūpa as it is continually arises, changes and ceases. This whirling-around is the heart of suffering and is far from that peace and stillness which is happiness. Then, when the nāma-rūpa fails to follow the plans we had on first grasping hold of them —and yet we still attempt to hold on to them— another load of suffering is added: Sorrow, lam-

entation and all the other forms of suffering that we have already mentioned.

To remedy this situation and end suffering therefore requires a focussing on that 'self' that spins together with the myriad things in their arising and extinguishing. This specifically means the spinning with the nāma-rūpa, both internally and externally. Focus to see that when 'self' spins with them, there must always be suffering too; and the less it does so, the less suffering it must endure.

To actually reduce this spinning, you must focus on the desire and grasping within yourself. See that: 'This is craving arising'; 'this is grasping and clinging arising.' Realize that, 'a lot of desire means a lot of suffering' and 'less desire and grasping means less suffering.' The complete lack of desire and grasping is the complete absence of suffering, and this is what forms the extinction of suffering *(dukkha-nirodha)*.

However, in the beginning stages of practice it isn't yet possible to give up all desire and grasping. Therefore make sure that you are wise in your selection of what to desire. Don't desire and grasp anything evil; instead just take firm hold of whatever is good and skilful. This alone will extinguish the suffering that arises from doing evil, and one will also receive the happiness that comes from progressing in the ways of virtue. When you have practised and trained yourself to the full limit of goodness, then there is no need to wish for good any more —because one is already there. At this point there is no need to wish for anything anymore —but that is the final and ultimate stage.

At this present stage, you must still want to hold onto goodness which is virtue and moral precepts, onto samadhi and onto wisdom. Use the precepts to extinguish the suffering involved in wrong and unskilful behaviour. Use samadhi to avoid the hindrances when they arise in the mind, so as to extinguish their suffering. Use a trained wisdom as the tool to extinguish the suffering arising from the more subtle agitation, desires and grasping.

Speaking of using wisdom to investigate: Focus it in the rūpa-and-nāma and penetrate to its natural course of arising and passing away. Then whatever object is encountered will be received by this wisdom that can see through to its arising and passing away, and it will be extinguished when it reaches the mind. However much hankering or dejection one has, however befooling and delusory the object may appear, on reaching the mind all of it will be extinguished by wisdom's insight into the arising and passing away. The object then loses its power and the mind is no longer jolted or upset by it.

Normally however, when objects reach an ordinary person's mind they completely adhere and stick there. When a form is seen or a sound heard, it enters in and sticks fast in the mind. These objects have the power to agitate the mind, but when wisdom with insight into arising and passing away is developed, it can cut them all away. This, then, is the resolution and conclusion. It is the end for suffering, which will never again come in to possess the mind. This is the way of practice to extinguish suffering.

The means and strategy for steadily removing suffering, step by step, is an assiduous and persistent investigation into nāma-rūpa to see its arising and passing away. It's a training to clear the mind so as to see the principles of the natural course of things. The curing of the inner suffering will enhance one's mindfulness and wisdom so that they can try to deal to the best of their ability with the external suffering that one may confront.

When one is skilled in this Buddhist Way of practice, one will be able to contend with any form of suffering. Even if one is surrounded by (external) suffering, one can still deliver and safe-keep the mind. The Buddhist Teaching is a religion which offers a refuge that is really reliable because it teaches a genuine method to extinguish suffering. But to realize this, you will have to study and practise in the way I have explained here. Then you will receive the results in a gradual extinguishing of suffering, according to the level of your practice.

17th October 2504 B.E. (1961)

Talk 21

The Truth of Extinction United With the Truth of the Path

Please will you now centre your mind within yourself. Focus on the mind with its mental-object. This means seeing the mind as it thinks about its present thought, concern or preoccupation. Is your mind calm or not? Whilst listening to this Dhamma talk, this means seeing the mind as it is thinking upon that Dhamma which is being heard. The object is now the Dhamma subject that is being heard and thought about.

The Discourse explains that suffering originates because of craving, and that craving both arises and ceases in delightful-and-pleasurable-things *(piyarūpa sātarūpa)*. As craving ends in the place where it arises it must extinguish there. This doesn't refer to external things, but to these very objects and preoccupations in the mind.

The object as a delightful-and-pleasurable-thing, which the mind is mulling-over, is really form. When we see a person with our eyes the mind takes over that visual form as a mental image. It appears in the mind as a full and complete image of that person. If, instead of a person, one sees a tree, a mountain or any material thing, then the mind takes it over and it appears complete in the mind as a tree, mountain or whatever. When one hears a sound through the ears, the mind will take that subject as a complete image into the mind. The mind takes in visual forms from the eyes, sounds from the ears (and similarly for all six sense bases) as mental images. Thus, those objects manifest as entities in the mind.

The mind, however, doesn't take everything in as images. A sight or sound or anything that doesn't possess any interesting feature is released to pass on by, while those things that do are taken in as images. This, therefore, is why the Lord Buddha used the term *'delightful and pleasurable thing'* for anything which fascinates and enthrals the mind to the point where it is taken in as an image.

Craving and grasping will permeate that image and it can then be considered that the originator *(samudaya)* or craving is born. If there is no image or delightful-and-pleasurable-thing, then craving has nowhere to arise. Later though, when they are present in the mind, craving can indeed arise. This is why it is said that when it arises it does so in the delightful-and-pleasurable-things —which are exactly these images and objects.

Why does craving arise? Because *not-knowing* or delusion is watching those mental objects. When ignorance or delusion is watching, images will become evident as either agreeable, disagreeable or enthralling. If one now watches with knowledge instead of delusion, one will see that it is all only a matter of mental-images being taken in and fashioned by the mind into entities. The form which the eye sees is really outside but it appears to fix itself in the mind because an image is fabricated of it. This can be compared with taking a photograph. Even though the real thing is outside, it appears as if it is fixed in the film. In fact, of course, it is just an image caught there and not the real thing at all. A person's mind which fabricates a mental image is similar to that film which catches different forms through a lens arrangement, which itself can be compared to the visual organ.

Now then, focus that knowing to investigate through into another level. There is the mental image, object or form which becomes fixed and fashioned in the mind, and then there is external matter. This might be experienced as a person, tree, mountain or some other thing, and it too is compounded and conditioned. None of these things existed before the elements came together to make them up and, once arisen, they transform, change and finally disperse. Therefore they are just elements combined together, the earth element making up the hard parts, the water element the fluid parts, the fire element the warmth, the wind element the motion, and the space element the empty spaces. This being so, they all must be void —void of entity or self.

Focus that knowing (which is not delusion) to see the mental image dispersed as elements. See it as void and empty of entity and self. When this voidness is evident, then that mental image— whether agreeable, disagreeable or deluding— will dissolve. Craving will then have nothing to seize-on and so must subside and abate. This is why, when

craving extinguishes, it does so in the delightful-and-pleasurable things.

The important point here is that if the mind takes in and watches that mental image of a delightful-and-pleasurable thing with delusion, craving will immediately spring up. This is the route for the origination of suffering. If however the mind can see it all with knowledge as void of entity or self, then craving will at once subside. This is the route for the extinction of suffering. The crucial thing in extinguishing craving therefore lies with *knowing*. This training of the mind to develop knowledge is called the Path *(magga)* — the way of practice to end suffering.

The *knowing* mind is also the *calm, stilled,* mind and so the training in tranquillity is also the Path to end suffering.

The *stilled* mind is in its *natural* state and so the training to establish this *naturalness* can also be called the Path to end suffering.

The importance therefore lies in the training of the mind to *know*, to be *still and calm* and to be *natural*.

The direct way for the mind to know is through knowing about suffering, knowing the cause of suffering, knowing the extinction of suffering and knowing the Path of practice to attain to the extinction of suffering.

Knowing suffering means knowing the delightful-and-pleasurable mental images and objects as merely images, merely delightful and pleasurable things that must all arise and disappear in the mind. It means knowing that even the external substance is also of a nature to arise and pass away, being composed of elements and void of entity or self. Focus to know the truth about these mental-images and about the myriad external things which lead to such images.

This knowing of suffering is therefore not just a looking at any distress that has arisen in one's body or mind. That's not all it is. People experience various degrees of bodily or mental distress because they are unable actually to see suffering and therefore cannot free the mind from suffering. Those who see suffering and know the truth about delightful-and-pleasurable mental images and external things will not engage and mix with those things, and so will not suffer.

Knowing the cause of suffering means carefully focussing on craving and grasping. The condition of liking, disliking or deluded attachment for a mental-image, signifies that craving has sprung up. Learn to recognize and know this craving, and it will then subside.

Focus into this subsiding, this extinction of suffering which one is encountering. In truth, we are not all continuously overwhelmed by suffering. Suffering arises only when craving is born. Even if one does not practise, on some occasions suffering will lessen and subside. This can be seen as an occasional abating of suffering. On coming to practise Dhamma, one extinguishes suffering by focussing on that abatement which stills and cools the mind. The mind will then be characterized by naturalness, stillness, knowingness, and by clarity and brightness. These are the features of the extinction of suffering. You must realize this.

Knowing the way of practice to the extinction of suffering involves a focussing on the causes that lead to that extinction: The mind must be knowing, stilled and natural. One does not simply allow suffering to arise and cease of itself, for that might not only take a long time but also be highly dangerous. One practises to develop that knowing, stillness and naturalness, for these lead to the cessation of suffering by extinguishing craving and grasping.

Craving arises and ceases in the same place, that place being delightful-and-pleasurable-things or mental-images. But to extinguish craving requires the development of that knowingness which is wisdom and not delusion. When that knowing is in constant supervision, objects can no longer come in and bring about the arising of suffering, because craving can no longer be provoked —for one is then fully aware.

18th October 2504 B.E. (1961)

Talk 22

The Truth of the Path *(Magga)*

Today we have reached the topic of the Eightfold Path *(Magga)* and I will therefore take the factors one at a time so you can see them in and for yourself. The Path has eight factors:

The first factor is right view *(sammā-diṭṭhi)*. This is the understanding of suffering, of the origination of suffering, of the extinction of suffering and of the path leading to the extinction of suffering.

See this suffering in your own self whenever you encounter it. Understand it then. Realize that these five aggregates arise at birth and then must grow old and die. This is their inevitable course. If you grasp and cling to these five aggregates as *me-and-mine*, then when they become engaged in suffering, so do you. Focus on your going along with this suffering of the five aggregates.

See the cause of the arising of suffering. This is seeing the mind's craving and desire, which are the creators of all of the different forms of suffering.

See the abating and subsidence of suffering. This is the mind bright and clear of craving because that desire has waned. At this time, if such craving has subsided, you will have relief from suffering, even if only temporarily. See this temporary cessation of suffering in the mind and notice the knowledge and understanding which is able to relieve and still that suffering. Seeing this understanding is seeing the Path.

Focus in yourself to see the present condition of suffering, its cause and origination, its extinction and the Path.

The second factor is right thought *(sammā-sankappa)*. This is thought free from sensual desire, from ill will and cruelty.

Focus to see the thought and reflections going on in your mind. What are they about? When your thoughts are free from sensuous desire —as when you are reflecting on Dhamma— then be aware of it. They have not been pulled away to like, desire and find satisfaction in the affairs of visual objects, sounds, odours, tastes or tangibles.

When there are thoughts free of ill will and vindictiveness, and thoughts free of cruelty, then be aware of that. See and be aware of your thoughts and reflections.

The third factor is right speech *(sammā-vācā)*. This is abstaining from lying, tale bearing, harsh language and foolish babble. See this in your own mind. Is there such thought of abstinence present or not? When it can be observed, this indicates that the factor of right speech is present. You don't need to speak though: Even being silent with such abstinence is already considered right speech.

The fourth factor is right (bodily) action *(sammā-kammanta)*. This is abstaining from killing, stealing and unlawful sexual behaviour (or from breaking the rules of celibacy). See if this abstinence is present in your mind. If it is, then you should understand that this is right action. There is no need to *do* anything though, for the abstinence is already considered right action.

The fifth factor is right livelihood *(sammā-ājiva)*. This is the abstaining from wrong livelihood and instead following one's livelihood in a correct and proper way. Focus in the mind to see your present lifestyle. Were the necessities of life supporting it obtained by right or wrong means? If you note that they were found in a right and correct way, then you can consider this as right livelihood.

The sixth factor is right effort *(sammā-vāyāma)*. This is the effort of avoiding or overcoming evil and unwholesome things, and of developing and maintaining wholesome things.

Focus to see unwholesomeness or evil, and wholesomeness or virtue in your own mind —for this is where they first arise. Inspect to see about your actions *(kamma)* which arise from within the mind. If you find the mind is thinking of doing unwholesome actions or evil, then make an effort to avoid that action. If your inspection reveals the mind is already concerned with unwholesomeness or evil, then make an effort to overcome and abandon that, so as not to do it again. Such evil actions can be avoided. We *are* capable of avoiding unwholesomeness.

Now focus to see the virtue or wholesomeness. That virtue which you have not yet done but are capable of doing —make an effort to do it. That virtue which you have already done —make an effort to maintain, support and develop it further.

This matter requires you to train your endeavour and effort. 'Effort' can be understood as meaning 'being dauntless' in the abandoning of evil and in the pursuit and implementation of goodness and virtue. This dauntlessness is necessary because of the obstacles which block such an effort: the inner obstacles of the defilements *(kilesā)* in one's mind and the external surrounding circumstances that can also act as a block. These defilements are lust, hatred and delusion or desire which pull away to avoid virtue but provoke the doing of evil. The external situation comprises those people, things or any of the various outside causes that engage and pull the mind into evildoing and away from virtue. When this is the case if the mind is weak and easily daunted it will suffer defeat from the defilements within itself. It will also fail against the external circumstances and be misled into doing evil and being far from virtue.

You must therefore strengthen your effort and dauntlessness so that the mind is intrepid and can meet and beat the defilements within it as well as those misleading external circumstances. You can then avoid evil and cultivate virtue, as has already been explained. Inspect your mind to see if there is present within it that effort, that dauntlessness which can defeat the inner defilements and the external situation. If your mind is dauntless, without being weak, lazy or sluggish, you will be able to abandon evil and cultivate virtue. Then all kinds of evil can be avoided and all kinds of virtue accomplished. You can then consider that the factor of right effort is present.

The seventh factor is right mindfulness *(sammā-sati)*. Inspect what you are recollecting or being mindful about at this moment. If your recollection is concerned with affairs of lust or greed, hatred or delusion, then this is not *right* mindfulness. This lust, greed, hatred and delusion can be referred to in short as a pair *hankering and dejection* — and this is the sort of mindfulness and recollection which lead them to arise in the mind. The mind must recollect or shift out to take in an agreeable issue for hankering to arise, or a disagreeable issue which results in dejection. This sort of mindfulness leads defilements into arising in the mind. However, this is *not* right mindfulness *(sammā-sati)*.

Right mindfulness is the recollection that brings in only those matters which will relieve and allay that hankering-and-dejection and lead to calmness and purity in the mind. It comprises the recollection and examination of one's complete body. This has been explained previously, stage by stage, in the section on mindfulness of the body *(kāyānupassanā)*; the examination of pleasant, painful and intermediate feelings as presented in the section on mindfulness of feeling *(vedanānupassanā)*; the examination of the mind and its present state as presented in the section on mindfulness of the mind *(cittānupassanā)*; the examination of objects of mind as presented in the section on mindfulness of mental objects *(dhammānupassanā)*.

The preceding explanation was graduated step by step, but in brief one can say, *recollect and see your body, feelings, mind, mental objects and issues. Be aware so that you know in your mind the condition of body, feeling, mind, mental objects and issues.* Adopt these things as objects to manifest clearly in the mind. For example, when you focus on a bodily part, then manifest that clearly as an object in your mind. Make a feeling, condition of mind or mental issue manifest as a clear object in the mind. This is the external seeing, being the manifesting of objects gathered together. Hankering and dejection concerning any object occur because one does not see its arising and disappearing. When one can see the disappearing as well as the arising, then hankering and dejection cannot be born or will occur too late. The object where hankering and dejection sought to establish themselves is not viable anymore because it is about to disappear.

Focus on your mindfulness. When you see that it is established in the *foundations of mindfulness* (body, feelings, mind, or mental objects) and that it is centred within rather than swerving away after external objects, this indicates —even if one is only at the beginning stage— that it is the start of right mindfulness *(sammā-sati)*. When this mindfulness is swift and fully agile it will immediately catch and realize the *arising and disappearing* and will therefore be able to prevent *hankering and dejection*. This is a mindfulness well established, full and swift. Inspect the mindfulness within yourself: If it has these characteristics, you can be sure it is right mindfulness *(sammā-sati)*.

The eighth factor is right concentration *(sammā-samādhi)*. This is

the setting and establishing of the mind in samadhi and, when it focuses on an object, fixing on it firmly. This also must rely on mindfulness. Mindfulness recollects in the body, feelings, mind and mental objects while samadhi centres and establishes itself in the body, feeling, mind or mental object. If mindfulness is present but samadhi isn't firmly established, then an awareness and understanding of various things cannot arise. If mindfulness is not present, then samadhi can't be established. This means that they must go together: mindfulness of an object and samadhi established in that object. Inspect to see this in yourself. If your mind is still unstable and not firmly established, then samadhi has not yet arisen. Later, when the mind has advanced and is stable and firmly established together with mindfulness, it gives rise to knowledge *(ñāṇa)*. This is right concentration or right samadhi.

Of the eight factors of the Path, right speech, right action and right livelihood together form moral virtue *(sīla)*. In short this is the natural mind which is orderly and restrained without any thought of disturbing it in a wrong way. When you inspect your mind and find this *naturalness*, then you can consider that this is moral virtue: right speech, right action and right livelihood within yourself. There's no need to look for many things, just check to see if the mind is *natural*. If it is, then *that* is moral virtue.

Right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration are together known as *samādhi*. This is the mind stilled and firmly established. Inspect your mind to see if it is stilled and firm within the determined object without any wavering. There's no need to reckon up *samadhi's* components just check to see if your mind is stable and calm. If it is, then that is samadhi.

Right view and right thought together make up wisdom *(paññā)* which is *knowing*. Inspect your mind to see whether *knowing* that is wise to the arising and disappearing of things, is present or not. If it is then it can immediately deal with any defilements. It will either know before the defilements arise or, if too late, it will finally realize and again quickly cut them out. This *knowing* is wisdom, and by seeing this single thing you won't need to reckon up all the composite factors.

If we summarize all of this we can say, *focus on the natural mind, the calm established mind and that knowing in the mind*. We can then expand into the Eightfold Path according to the conditions I've already mentioned.

To summarize again: We can see that the natural mind, the calm established mind and the knowing mind must all be one. The natural mind must be a calm established mind, which must in turn be a knowing mind. They can all be brought together as one. This is what the Lord Buddha meant when He spoke of virtue being samadhi and wisdom; of samadhi being virtue and wisdom, and of wisdom being virtue and samadhi. This is the convergence of the Path into one.

This Eightfold Path can be summarized and reduced to three, and then further to one, which is the Path's convergence. Everyone has this way of practice within himself to a greater or lesser extent.

Inspect this Path in your own mind. Examine the detailed and comprehensive aspect of the eightfold form and the more integrated aspects of the threefold and the unified forms. With constant inspection you will know the state of the Path within yourself: whether it is slack and undeveloped or exalted and mature. When you can always see and know the true state of the Path within yourself it is called *'attaññū'* —a knowing of oneself. The Path will then be steadily developed and cultivated.

Will you now prepare to listen with attention while the monks chant concerning this Path. Afterwards, determine set your minds on practising for calm and tranquillity.

25th October 2504 B.E. (1961)

Endnotes

1. The Five Precepts *(Pañca Sīla)* are:

1) I undertake the training to abstain from the killing of any living being.

2) I undertake the training to abstain from stealing.

3) I undertake the training to abstain from wrong sexual behaviour.

4) I undertake the training to abstain from lying and wrong speech.

5) I undertake the training to abstain from the use of intoxicants (alcohol and drugs etc.).

2. These six external objects and their corresponding sense organs are referred to throughout these Dhamma talks. Sometimes eye-and-visual-object and ear-and-sound are given as general examples, but the same applies to each sense base. Also note that mind (or*mano*) together with mental-object (or *dhamma*) is reckoned as the sixth sense pair. This *dhamma* and the Dhamma of the Triple Gem have different meanings.

3. Throughout these Dhamma talks these three types of feeling will be referred to, sometimes in an abbreviated form.

4. This will usually mean sitting in a cross-legged, 'samādhi-posture.' All of those present listening to the Dhamma talk would have taken up this posture.

5. 'Object' here, and normally throughout this translation, renders the Thai word *arom*. The original Pali term *(ārammaṇa)* referred only to sense objects, though in everyday speech it has now come to mean something more like 'mood'. Often, therefore, there is an emotional edge to this word.

6. This is a rendering of the Thai '*yin-dee, yin-rai*' and will recur repeatedly throughout this book. It refers to the opposite tendencies of welcoming, being pleased and hankering after something, with the displeasing, unwelcome rejection of something.

7. *Samādhi* is the state when the mind is established; it is the fixing of the mind on a single object. It can also be translated as 'concentration,' though in this book it is often left untranslated as it is already widely known.

8. In Thailand cremations are very much part of the social scene. They form an important rite of passage and, unlike a marriage ceremony, directly concern Buddhism and the monks.

9. Everyone listening would have had his or her eyes closed, sitting in samadhi posture.

10. The factor of enlightenment of *dhamma-vicāya* is often taken to stand for investigation of the Buddhist doctrine (Dhamma), though here it is the investigation of bodily and mental phenomena *(nāma-rūpa-dhamma)*.

11. In the Thai this is '*tamadar*' (Pali: *dhammatā*). In this context it has a meaning as something being the natural, inevitable and therefore normal or ordinary course of events.

12. Immediately after the Dhamma talk, the monks present would chant some appropriate passages from the Suttas.

A Brief Glossary

[The brief definitions offered here accord with the usage of this present work.]

Abyakata : Indeterminate.
Ākāsa: Space.
Akusala: Unwholesome, unskilful.
Āmisa: The worldly, carnal type of happiness and pleasure. It is compared to a baited hook, an attractive object which contains suffering. (Cp. *nirāmisa.*)
Ānāpāna-sati: Mindfulness of the in-and out-breathing.
Anattā: 'not-self.'
Aniccā; (***Aniccatā***): Impermanent; (Impermanence.)
Anusaya: Proclivities, inclinations, tendencies.
Ārammaṇa: Object.
Ariya: Noble. (opp. *putthujjana*.)
Arom (Thai): Mental object, preoccupation. (cp. *ārammaṇa*.)
Āsava: Canker.
Avijjā: Ignorance, nescience.
Āyatana: Sense base.

Bhikkhu: Mendicant monk.
Bhūta: Being, entity.
Bodhisatta (Pali); (Skt. *Bodhisatva*): A being who aspires and works towards Buddhahood.
Bojjhaṅga: Factors of Enlightenment.
Buddha: One who became perfectly awakened through self discovery of Dhamma. Normally the Lord **Buddha** of this present age.
"Bud-dho": A word that is (silently) recited to aid in concentration practice.

Cakkhu: The eye; as a sense door.
Cetanā: Intention.
Chanda: Intention, desire, will or zeal.
Citta: Mind; being the third foundation of mindfulness.

dhamma: Usually means mental object; the forth foundation of mindfulness.
Dhamma: The liberating law discovered and proclaimed by the Lord Buddha.
Dhātu: Element.
Dosa: Hate.
Dukkha: Suffering or pain.

Ekaggatā: One-pointedness of mind.

***Jarā*: Ageing, decay.
Jāti: Birth; from conception to parturition.

Kamma (Pali); (Skt. *Karma*): Action.
Kammaṭṭhāna: 'Working-ground' for the practice of meditation; a term for 'subjects of meditation.'
Kāya: 'Group,' 'Body'; here may refer to the corporeal group or physical body *(rūpa-kāya)*; or to the mental group *(nāma-kāya)*.
Kāyagatā-sati: Mindfulness with regard to the body.
Khandha: Aggregate.
Kusala: Wholesome, skilful.

Lobha: Greed or lust.

Magga: Path; The Truth of the Path.
Mahābhūta: The 'Primary Elements'; also ***dhātu***.
Mano: Mind, especially as a base *(āyatana)*.
Maraṇa: Death.
Moha: Delusion.

Nāma: (lit: 'name'); 'mind', mentality.
Nāma-rūpa: (lit: name-&-matter or name-&-form); 'mind and body'; Phenomena as experienced.

Nibbāna: The extinction of suffering.
Nimitta: The mark or sign which is taken up in concentration practice.
Nirāmisa: Happiness or pleasure as an unworldly, non-carnal sort; without the baited-hook. (Cp. *āmisa*.)
Nirodha: Ceasing, cessation.
Nīvaraṇa: Hindrances.
Ñāṇa: Knowledge.

Pakati (or ***pakati-sīla***): The normal, 'without crisis' state of affairs. (The natural or genuine morality as distinguished from prescribed morality.)
Pāli: The ancient Indian language of the *Suttas*.
Pañca-khandhā: The five aggregates.
Paññā: Wisdom, discernment.
Paramattha sacca: Truth in the highest, ultimate, or absolute sense. (Opp. *sammati*.)
Paramī: Perfections. Ten qualities leading to Buddhahood.
Paṭikkūla: Impure.
Phassa: Contact.
Pīti: Rapture.
Piyarūpa Sātarūpa: The delightful and pleasurable things.
Puthujjana: Worldling. (Opp. *Ariya*.)

Rāga: Lust.
Rūpa: 1) Matter, substance, corporeality (see *Khandha)*; 2) Visual Object (see *Āyatana*). (Cp. ***Nāma****.)*

Sacca: Truth.
Saddhā: Faith, confidence, trust.
Samādhi: Concentration. *Upacāra* and *appanā samādhi* are 'neighbourhood' and 'attainment concentration.'
Samatha: Calm, tranquillity.
Sammati: Conventional, (cp. *paramattha sacca*.)
Sampajañña: Clear comprehension, often paired with *sati*.
Samudaya: The origin, arising (of suffering.)
Sañcetanā: Intention.
Saṅgha: The Community who truly practise following the Lord Buddha's Dhamma.
Saṅkhāra: Mental-formations. The processes that concoct and fashion.
Saññā: Perception. (In Thai it has also come to mean recognition.)
Saraṇa: Refuge.
Sati: Mindfulness.
Satipaṭṭhāna: Foundations of Mindfulness.
Sāvaka: Noble Disciple.
Sīla: Moral virtue.
Sukha: Pleasure, happiness, ease.
Sutta: Discourse.

Taṇhā: Craving.
Ti-Ratana: Three Jewels; the Buddha, Dhamma and the Noble Sangha.

Upādāna: Grasping, holding.
Upekkhā: Equanimity, indifference.

Vedanā: Feeling.
Vicāra: Sustained thought, reflection.
Viññāṇa: Consciousness.
Vipassanā: Insight.
Viriya: Energy, exertion.
Vitakka: Applied thought, reflection.